

Enter into thy Closet :
OR, A
METHOD
AND
ORDER
FOR PRIVATE
DEVOTION.
WITH
AN APPENDIX
Concerning the Frequent and Holy Use
OF THE
LORDS SUPPER.

Third Edition.

by Ed. Wottenhall.

**Zech. 3. 2. Is not this a brand plucked out of
the fire?**

**London, Printed for John Martyn, and are to be sold
at the Bell a little without Temple-Bar, 1670.**

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CLOSET.



Sold by Io: Martyn at y^e Bell without Temple B

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OF A

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DEVOTION

WITH

AN APPENDIX

Concerning the Frequency and Holy Life

OF THE

LORDS SUPPER.

Third Edition.

Revised by the Author and a friend of his
the first

London, Printed for John. Almon, and are to be sold
at the Bell a little without Temple-Bar, 1790.



TO THE

Right Reverend Father in God,

S E T H

Lord Bishop of Sarum.

My very good Lord,

HE who writ this, though for many reasons he desired the world should be ignorant of him, yet could not content himself, it should be ignorant it very much owes to your Lordship both him, who-ever he is, and this his book, what ever it: Him in the care you have ever exprest towards him and it, in that some discourse of yours, though but casual at Table, gave
A occasion

Ms. A. 9. 2. 1670

occasion to its compofure (for the
main,) and publication. It now
the third time, in fo ſhort a
a ſpace, ſeeing the light, hath al-
moſt flattered its Author into an
apprehenſion, that if the world
continne in that little Sobriety and
Devotion, which (alas !) a ſmall
part of it at preſent weares, this
may live the longeſt of any thing
he may do. At leaſt he begs you'l
think, when he inſcrib'd it to you,
that he thought it might: How-
ever, ſhould he ever be bleſt with
marble, he aſſures you t'will
not ſuffice him, that he hath writ
your name in water. God preſerve
your Lordſhip, what you truly are,
an Ornament to your age and
Countrey, a Bleſſing to his
Church, and a Refuge to the ſo-
berly Religious.

AN



AN
ADMONITION
TO THE
READER.

W^Hat it is the fa-
shion to call an
Epistle to the
Reader, or, if it be some-
what longer, a *Preface*,
the Author stiled an *Ad-*
monition, or *Advertisement*
to the Reader, that by a
more unusual title he
might the more surely
draw him to read it, be-
fore he doth the Book.

A 2 And

An Admonition

And the first thing, which he admonisheth thee of, Good Reader, is that thou neither question nor scruple what judgment he is of, before thou hast considered what he here saith: nor that when thou shalt have read a little way into the book, thou make such conjectures of its Authors opinion, as to conclude the book fit only to be laid aside by thee, because he, who writ it, may haply dissent from thee in some matters. He very little
med-

to the Reader.

meddles with any matters here, in which it is likely that any sober Christian dissents from him. A disrellishing expression, or a Chapter should not be warrant enough to thee for thy sentencing him this or that, and rejecting what else he says for thine and common good. Perhaps he may make mention of a *Common-prayer-Book*, or *Holy days*, only to draw in them, who will hear of no devotion which rejects these, but

A 3 ext-

An Admonition

execrate it still as *Fanatical*, to the reading his Book, and thereby to a more serious and Christian use of those things, than what all are guilty of. Perhaps, on the other side, he may be in good earnest, and thinking them right Christian and useful, commend them to thy practice, and direct thee, so to use them, as that thou shalt by such use of them begin less to quarrel with them. Either design is honest, and it is no matter whether
whether

to the Reader.

whether it is, which he hath, nor who, or what he is. He would onely have thee to take him for a man of serious and sober principles, and one who would have all that profess Christianity to be such also: (and such thou must either take him to be, or else, being that thou knowest him not, and so canst not know him to be otherwise, thou art uncharitable :) And as being such, that, which he endeavours here is to bring thee seriously upon thy

A 4 knees

An Admonition

knees before God, there to examine thine heart and actions according to that Christian rule, which indispensably enjoyns thee Charity, Meekness, Moderation, Peaceableness, and such sweet Virtues; which if thou do but use thy self to, thou wilt judge thy self no otherwise a Christian than as these Christian Graces are in thee, and receive as a new-born-Babe, the sincere milk of the doctrine of godliness, come it to thee in what vessels soever.

Ano..

to the Reader.

Another thing, which he hath to advise thee of, is matter of direction in the use of this Book : in which case his desire to thee is, that thou wilt first read over the Tables, which are annexed to it, and marke the substance of what he there promiseth to treat of; that then if thou resolve to make use of this method for thy devotion (and, the Author thinks thou wilt, if thou have the patience to consider it, and canst obtain leisure of thy

comod

A 5

self

An Admonition

self to practice it) that thou wilt read the Book once or twice over, and endeavour by attent consideration to understand it; and when thou hast once got the Book thus into thine head, the practice will soon grow easie (he is sure, at least, most sweet and blessedly delightful.) Be but perswaded to try it one month or two, and see if thou canst find in thy heart to be so injurious to thine own felicity, as to lay it aside again.

Some-

to the Reader.

Somewhat too there should be said as to what is likely to be objected against the contents hereof. It may happily be conceived there are here some practices directed to in ordinary devotions, which are too high for every mans reach (as is meditating upon Scripture, in such sort as is here taught, endeavouring the mortification of sin in such rational methods, &c.) some circumstances too, as to the place of retirement,

An Admonition

unnecessary, or above
most mens conditions, &c.
As to the former of which,
the Authors answer is, that
patterns of this nature
must not be set too low,
for that men are apt rather
to aim under than over;
that he thinks there is very
little of practice here, by
which a plain capacity
may not understand some-
what, which he will con-
clude to be his duty,
though it may be he reach
not all in that case; and
further both as to this and
to

to the Reader.

to the latter point supposed to be objected, that the higher matters and more curious circumstances are commended onely to men of abilities, estates and leisure suitable: Let all go as high as they can, and their devotions will be sure to be more compleat, than if they had aimed lower.

Now, which is all that shall be added, possibly some may think such Books as these needless at present, after so many extant in this kind already.

Here-

An Admonition

* The
dreadful
fire of
London.
Sept.
1666.

Hereunto the Authors Apology might be, that the number of such books is much at present lessened by those * mercyleſs flames out of which the providence of God ſaved this Book, (when it was in a manner all printed off ſave this Preface) that this preſervation of it is ſome excuſe for its appearance, and preſage that it may not be altogether fruitleſs: But this being waved, that which was his answer in the Preface, which thoſe fore-

to the Reader.

forementioned flames consumed, when the Book it self escaped, is, that he is not much read in our English Books, and so knows not what or how many of this nature are extant; but that of those, which it hath been his lot to see, he knows none, which do more aim at the hitting the *genius* and humour of every mans devotion (be he of what judgment he will) than he hath done in this; and that, be the Reader a conformable person, or any
of

An Admonition

of the contrary perswasions, if he be but serious, and resolved not to reject the main, which he cannot but like, for a page or two, which though he may not much brook, yet he can scarce be very angry with; the Author believes such person will not think his pains to no purpose: However, that, in this hope he cannot but be confident, that the meer writing and publishing hereof will be a perpetual engagement to himself of a more strict

to the Reader.

strict and circumspect life;
and that therefore, if in
none other, yet in this re-
spect, it comes not forth in
vain: To which purpose
he desires thee (good Rea-
der) to help him with thy
Prayers, as he hath endea-
voured to help thee by
the following Advice.

A



A
TABLE
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a preparatory Discourse
and Introduction to the
rest.

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The Table.

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Enter into thy Closet.

OR A

METHOD

For private Devotion.

Part. I. Chap. I.

*Of the necessity of privacy,
and those Christian duties
which require it.*



That person can no wise
be esteemed a serious
and through Christi-
an, uprightly and cor-
dially discharging his
duty towards God, who is a stranger
unto privacy, and useth not to with-
draw himself from company, even
B the

part. I. the company of his nearest friends,
 Chap. I. presenting himself alone before
 God: For that, besides the worship
 of God, which we perform to him
 in the *publick assemblies*, and joynt-
 ly with the rest of the *Family*, of
 which we are members, besides, I
 say, praying, hearing, and receiving,
&c. in the Church, and praying with
 the people of our own house, there
 are severall religious duties to be
 performed by us, without which the
 power of godliness can never be
 kept alive in our hearts, nor the ser-
 vice, which before or with others we
 do unto God Almighty, be through,
 hearty and compleat; which duties
 can never be performed as they
 should be, if we are in company.
 To wit,

First, it is indispensably necessary
 that a Christian often examine him-
 self, take account of his own state and
 actions, whether his heart be so sted-
 fast in holy purposes as it hath been,
 or ought to be, or as he hath vowed
 to God it should be: whether his
 practices

Private Devotion.

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practices of late have been answerable to such resolutions and engagements, as he hath made: or whether his heart be more indifferent and careless than it was, his actions more loose and irregular; This, I say, is absolutely necessary to an holy life: for that without it, he may insensibly go back and grow worse, he may delay his returns unto God, or not return after severall wandrings, and (if suddenly catcht) die without the particular repentance of many sins.

Part. I.

Chap. 1.

Secondly, it is as necessary that a Christian confess himself to Almighty God, that is, that having taken such an account of his wandrings, he acknowledge them, bewail them, and beg pardon of them before God.

Thirdly, because repentance cannot be without reformation, it is necessary that he consult and consider with himself how he may grow better; what occasions of his sins there were, which may be avoided;

B 2

what

Part. I.
Chap. I.



what means of the contrary virtues, which may be used; and resolve seriously with himself, that these and these occasions he will avoid, these and these means use.

Now forasmuch as such resolutions can never be upright and firm, except made with deliberation, heed and thoughtfulness; and forasmuch as such deliberation cannot be taken in company, nor all things duly weighed, where we have a crowd of occasions and objects to take off our thoughts, it is therefore necessary that for such work we be alone: and in the other cases, because that examination of our selves must needs be very slighty and short which we make while we sit and talk with others; because also those confessions, which we make in publick or with others, may be, and most frequently are, too general to reach our particular cases and sins; it is therefore necessary for the doing of them also, that we retire or go alone.

And

Private Devotion

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And to conclude, because he Part. I.
Chap. 1. that would keep himself close to the ways of holiness, must do all these things often, it is therefore necessary, that he be often alone, at least as often as with any tollerable convenience he can, and, to that purpose, if his condition admit or will afford it, that he have a place convenient to retire to, which we will call a *Closet*.

Chap. II.

Of the situation and furniture of their Closet who have choice.

NOW (it being supposed that my condition allowes me so much choice, as that I might have it so) my *Closet* would I have no unpleasant place, as sweetly situated as any place of my house, that I might delight to be therein; and by no means a low or darksome room, but

Part. 1. as high as I well could: for that so
 Chap. 2. it will be most remote from the
 noise, company, and disturbance of
 the people who are busied usually
 below; and besides that, some se-
 cret property there is in such high
 and eminent places, whence we may
 behold the heavens and overlook
 the earth, which to me much raiseth
 the soul and elevates the affections,
 as if we derived or partaked more
 from heaven, by how much nearer
 we come to it. Our *Saviour* there-
 fore used to go up *into a mountain to*

Acts 10. pray: and *St. Peter went up upon*
 9. *the house* for the same purpose, that
 Acts 1. is probably into an upper room such
 13. & as the *Disciples* were assembled in.
 20. 8. And if it might be, my passage there-
 unto should be through two other
 outer rooms, at least through one,
 the door or doors of which I might
 ever have shut when I thither retir-
 ed, to the end that my voice, which
 many times I shall have occasion for
 my own quickening, to use, might
 not be heard without.

The

Private Devotion.

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The furniture of my closet I ^{Part. I.} would have a little more, than that ^{Chap. 2.} of *Elisba's* chamber, *A Table*, a *Stool* and a *Candlestick*: and instead ^{2 Kings 4.} of his bed an hard *couch* or great ^{30.} chair on which I might some times

lean my weary or aching head: But a couch the rather for that some times I haply might find it necessary to spend the whole night there, and might thereon take some repose.

To these I would add a *Bible*, a *Common prayer book*, two *paper books* (which when filled must be supplied by two others) and a *Pen* and *Ink*.

Another book or two (of which hereafter I may also see occasion to add to these. A chimney, against winters cold, to make the place endurable, if need be, a whole night,

would be no contemptible convenience. If besides these, I there keep any thing, as *Students* do *Books*, *Gentlemen* writings, and *Ladies* *Medicines*, &c. all these I would have placed on one side, or at least, one side I would have free from them,

B 4.

against

Part. 1. against which should either stand a
 Chap. 1. table, or a *Praying desk* (that when
 occasion should be I might lay a
 book or paper before me) and the
 wall over such desk or table should
 be hung (if I were able to do it) with
 some stuff, of one colour, (Green
 the best) to the end that when there
 kneeling at my prayers, I might have
 in mine eye nothing to call away
 or divert my thoughts.

To any man, whose genius this
 proposal suits not with, I offer that
 practise of *Daniel* (chap 6. 10.) who
opening his window or casement kneel-
 ed down with his face thitherward
 and prayed. By this means the mind,
 by the sight of the visible heavens,
 is carried in its thoughts into the in-
 visible, and more strongly contem-
 plates and adores the Creator of all,
 there dwelling. But this is onely
 practicable in the Countrey, or
 places of great privacy, & not at all
 seasons, because of the injuries of
 weather. I therefore prefer the other
 at least for constancy: both may be
 used in season.

Chap.

Chap. III.

*Of most Common entrance
into the Closet.*

MY Closet being thus fitted, it is supposed that my recourse thereto is either more or less solemn. At no time (except upon most earnest and hasty occasions) should my entrance thereto , want the solemnity of a *short* (but hearty) *Prayer* ; For this being a place principally designed for my devout retirement, and the performance of those private acts of worship which I owe to God , it becomes, by this its end and designement , after a sort separate or sacred , a certain secret Chappel for my self ; and may not therefore wantonly or slightly be by me entered into. I say , not by *Me* ; for what ever it is to others, to me ought it to be reverend. As therefore , when our ordinary occasions

Part. 1. call us into (or through) Churches,
 Chap. 3. we usually out of Reverence to
 him, to whom those places are de-
 voted, and in memory of those spi-
 ritual feasts, which we or our
 Christian brethren have there and
 in such places tasted, fall down on
 our knees and worship God, beg-
 ing his blessing upon us and his peo-
 ple, as often as there assembled, and
 praising him for the benefits which
 we or his people have there partak-
 en of; so when I come, though up-
 on common matters, into my clo-
 set, yet considering with my self,
 that I am now in that place, where
 in I have so often worshipped (or at
 least resolved often to worship)
 God, and had sweet converse with
 him, in memory thereof, and for rea-
 sons hereafter mentioned I would
 kneel down and pray, to this or the
 like effect.

My good God, whom I
 frequently and with my
 heart worship, Eless me I be-
 seech

Private Devotion. II

Part. I.
Chap. 3.

seech thee in the affairs I go about. Keep my heart with thee, at least ever keep it upright before thee: And as often as I here present my self, let thy good Spirit be present with me, to dispose me unto, and assist me in thy service, through Jesus Christ my Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

And having thus or otherwise, as I am able, or have opportunity, prayed, I would forthwith apply my self to what I intended.

Now such course observed, as often as I enter my *Closet*, will be many ways advantagious to me: *First*, it will be a means to keep my heart much with God, and to recall it to him, in case my thoughts have too much wandred from him. It will make me spirituall in ordinary matters and converse. *Secondly* it may be a means to procure a blessing upon my undertakings. *Thirdly*

Part. 1. I may the better expect Gods pre-
 Chap. 3. sence there, when I come purpose-
 ly to seek him.

It needs not after this discourse to admonish that we ever take heed what matters here we doe. I would not choose this as a place of my vainer discourse, or free hours, as some do; who are ever severest in company, and allow themselves liberty in private or amongst their confidants, whom if they can but get into such a place, where neither mens eye, nor ear can reach them (as the closet for the main is supposed to be) their company shall be vain and frolick to as high a degree almost as any mens. *I take it, (and I am greatly deceived if I mistake it) for a certain argument, that the serious belief of a God and of the World to come, is much wanting in his heart, who dare be naught, idle, or sinfully merry, if he can but get out of mans sight and cognizance.*

PART II.

Treating of Daily Closet Duties.

Chap. I.

That if I am a person of leisure I ought daily, twice in the day, to retire into my Closet for devotions sake.

IT followeth now to be considered of my more solemn retirement or entrance into my Closet. Now that I account a solemn recourse thither, when my business there is purely devotion. And such recourse is either ordinary, or more special.
My

Part. II.
Chap. I.

My ordinary retirement into my *Closet* should be daily, and that if my condition will conveniently admit, as most mens may, twice a day: oftner I may, as at noon, seldomer I well cannot.

- (1.) I am bound thereto upon the same grounds, upon which I am bound to pray twice a day: and the sum of them is, that the command saith, *Pray continually*; the meaning of which we cannot but take to be, (1) either pray alwayes when you may for other duties (that is, so much time as thou canst spare from the work of thy calling and due care of thy body, and other offices of Charity and Piety, spend in that duty of prayer) or else (2;) (parallel to that of the *continual burnt Offering*, which was called *Continual*, because ever continued in its course twice a day.) Keep a continual course of prayer morning and evening. And this the practices of the Saints in Scripture (which we may look upon as Exemplifications of

Private Devotion. 15

of that forenamed command) to Part. II.
 wit, the Practice of David Praying Cháp. 1.
Evening, Morning, and at Noon, of Psal. 55.
Daniel as many times, and none that 7.
 we read of less than twice, cannot Dsn. 1.
 but enforce upon us, as the least 10.
 which can be our duty in this case.

If any think they are excused
 from private prayer twice a day, by
 their praying twice a day with the
 Family, of which they are a part,
 They are to understand, that there
 is no particular strict command,
 touching the nature of our daily de-
 votions, prescribing them to be ei-
 ther publick or private, or both:
 but that it is most just and equita-
 ble that *God should have a liberal*
part of our time, as well as of our Dr. Ham
estates: that therefore if our con- Pract.
 dition be such, that besides the time, Catech.
 which we spend in prayer with the Lib. 3.
 Family (which no one, who would Sect. 2.
 have God to bless his Family, can
 think he may neglect) we have con-
 venient leisure from other necessary
 matters, it cannot be better bestow-
 ed

Part. II. ed, than in our Closet, and upon
Chap. I. our Souls. And it will question-

less be a piece of very sinful vanity to trifle it away, and omit what might so well have been employed upon: According as in matter of my estate, if after sufficient necessities and conveniences provided for my self and Family, there do yet remain in my hand a portion of what God hath given me, I cannot but look upon it as my duty to supply therewith the necessities of those who want; and as my sin, for me idly to squander it away, which might have filled so many hungry bellies, or cloathed so many naked or ragged backs. Further, God having injoynd me the duty of prayer, but lest the particular frequency of it, after the nature of other freewill offerings, to my Christian discretion, I ought not to be therefore the more heedless; but rather, because I know my sacrifice will be ever accepted, how often soever brought with an honest heart, out of an holy ambition

Private Devotion.

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ambition of pleasing God and sending up an odour of a sweet savour unto heaven, to bring it as often as I can: And surely twice a day I may present even my private devotions.

Part. II
Chap. 1.

If I be single and in my own power, there is no question but I may: If I be the Master or Mistress of a Family, there is little question of it: If I be a servant, or one who works for my living, there is indeed somewhat the more question; for that not only I may be straightned in time, but want the conveniency of privacy; But yet even in this case, what hinders, but that being I can not do so well as I would, I may do so well as I can? to wit, rising one piece of an hour ordinarily sooner, or lying down so much later, fall down upon my knees by my self at my beds side, and privately pour out my confessions and prayers before God. And what if my fellow servant be with me? Why should I be ashamed to do, before him

Part. I I, him, what he cannot but acknowledge
 Chap. 1. he also ought to do? Shall I not one
 day much more blush and be confounded at the omission of my duty before *Men* and *Angels* and God himself, than here at the performance of it? And which shame rather to be chosen? That before God, all Men, Angels, Devils, than this before one or two? That which is eternall, or this, which after I have once or twice despised, shall be troubled with no more? that which hath a real ground in turpitude and sin, or this which ariseth only from a foolish bashfulness? Begin to do so, and after the first or second time, thou wilt never be ashamed of it: I assure thee at least thou wilt never repent.

This then should be my ordinary retirement twice a day.

Our more special retirement ought to be upon *Lords days*, *Holy days*, and our own private *Fasts*, each of which will come hereafter to be considered. In the mean time

Private Devotion. 19

time our daily retirement and devotions must be proceeded with. Part. II.
Chap. 2.

Chap. II.

*Considerations to perswade to
daily devotion and pray-
er in private.*

ANd to the end I may be sure to keep such course as before-said, let me sit down and seriously weigh.

First, the concernment, importance and vast moment of those things, which by prayer I am to seek and may obtain, above the other, upon which most of my time is spent. What is it of wordly goods, which will not pass away (at least as to me and my enjoyment of it) with my self? I dying, all dies with me: my estate, my honors, my friends, and all such, are no more comfortable to me, when death once appears; but happily a torment, being
that

Part. II. that they are all now to be left. In
 Chap. 2. is therefore but to the end of my
 threescore years and ten (if I should
 live so long) or thereabouts, that
 these can be good at all: And of
 these my threescore years and ten
 (which it is a thousand to one whe-
 ther ever I reach) how many are
 already gone? Perhaps one Moy-
 ety, perhaps more. So then, all
 those things which my other time
 seeks, are of a pitiful, short and
 transient concernment. But the
 graces of Gods spirit, an holy heart,
 a good conscience, reconciliation
 with my heavenly Father, these
 and such like, are not only of con-
 cernment for my present happiness
 but for my eternal. *The richest,
 honorablest and most worldly happy
 Man, if devoid of grace, an enemy
 unto God, conscious to himself of
 villany, cannot in all his abundance
 here enjoy or like himself, much less
 either account himself or be ac-
 counted, an happy person. For what
 can that man acquiesce in, whose
 own

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own heart calling him a rogue, lays a fatal necessity upon him to hate and to be ever and anon ready to execrate himself? Certainly there is no present possible happiness, which is comparable to that blessed calme and quiet, which ariseth from the sense of a Mans own upright heart and discharged duty. Inso-
much that were there no such thing as an heaven to come, I should not feare to pronounce, that that man neglects those things which are of greatest conducement to his present happiness, who neglects to seek un-
to God, to commune with his own heart, to set all straight, and to re-claim himself to an holy life, the great means by which such peace, the most real felicity in the world, can be had. But suppose we such a person ready to die, *and it said un-*
to him, Thou fool this night shall thy
soul be taken from thee; his peace being unmade with God, himself unacquainted with heaven, his con-
science telling him that all his time
hath

Part. II.
Chap. 2.

Luk. 12.
20.

Part. II. hath been spent upon what he must
 Chap. 2. now leave, and no provision made
 Rom. 11. (but of a *treasure of wrath against*
 12. *the day of wrath*) for that eternal
 state, into which death is his entrance; is he not now a most unhappy wretch? Is it not to him a pain equal to the pains of death to think he must leave all? Hath he not therefore by devoting himself so to this world, and scraping together such an ample portion thereof, only made himself more miserable, and that in this present life? For is there any miserie here, like to that anguish, which racks such a soul upon his now instant departure? And would I, then, so spend my time as that I might by the spending of it, become more miserable then any, save those who have lived as I? Would I so spend it, as that the very thinking or reflecting, how I had spent it, should then most torment me, when I have most need of comfort, to wit in my dying hour? And yet thus do all men spend their days
 who

Private Devotion 23

who neglect their devotions, or duties of daily addresse unto God. Part. II.
Chap. 2.

But further, suppose we such a person dead; and we have him stript of all even his imaginary happiness, naked of every thing save his sins: *Of these his bones are full and they shall lye down with him in the dust:* Job 20. His works follow him and his wages meet him. Evident therefore it is, that what he hath spent his life upon, is now of no concernment or moment to him at all, any other-wise, than to render him for ever as miserable as he can be. And is this a desireable end, for a man all his days to be driving at; to be miserable in life by reason of an evil conscience, or an impossibility of liking and loving himself; to be miserable in death, by the advancing of that disquiet, his former torment; and most miserable after death by the perfection of that and all other mischiefs? Whereas if some of those days which the world employed had been taken up in seeking unto God

Part. II. God, how might that portion have
 Chap. 2. sanctified all the rest, have led him to
 a right improvement of what he got,
 and that improvement of all been an
 unspeakable pleasure and content to
 him here, and hereafter have
 wrought him at eternity of blessed-
 ness! Not to mention that unspeak-
 able satisfaction, which the hearty
 performance of such devotions,
 through the blood of Christ, would
 have filled him with, which we may
 hereafter consider. Whoso there-
 fore truly loves himself will love his
Closet and his Prayers.

Secondly, let me weigh the *Rea-
 sonableness* hereof, that God should
 have a *considerable part* of my *Time*
 who hath given me *so much* for my
self, and the *unreasonableness* of the
contrary. Let me deal ingeniously:
 may not God well expect more of
 my time, then what is by any law
 set apart or consecrate to this wor-
 ship? And it being the genuine
 Evangelical sense of the fourth com-
 mandment, Keep all thy life an ho-
 ly

Private Devotion. 25

By rest from doing thy own works, delighting thy self and acquiescing ever in the Lord, will it not in a good measure hold thus, Rest as much as thou canst to thy devotions, spend as many hours as thou canst with God? Or suppose that this Law would not in equity bind me hereunto (which it seems to do) is it not reasonable that there should be free-will-offerings of our time as well as of our Estates? And will there be any better way found for the employing of what we can spare thereof, than the thus sanctifying and devoting it unto God? I am confident whatever mens practices may be, their consciences cannot gainsay but do highly approve and commend to them what is pressed. We may complain fondly of the *shortness of time*; but evident it is that we *spend much* upon this world, much upon our gains, much upon our pleasures, much upon our ambitions, much also upon those necessary acts of life, eating, Drink-
C
ing.

Part. II.
 Chap. 2.

Isaiah 58.
 13, 14

26 A Method for

Part. H. ing, Sleeping, and much too upon
Chap. 2 (God knows) we know not what

Now let those who account themselves to have least leisure, find but time enough to consider, when they go to bed every night, how much time they have lost, or trifled away that day, and setting it down every night, reckon at the weeks end, and see, to how many hours it will amount. Do so but one week or two, and see if you do not blush at the ordinary excuse for neglect of prayer, that you have not time. For the issue will be of these two, the one, either my whole time hath been really imployed, and that upon my common affairs, and necessary care of my body, or else some part of it (to wit, so much as hath not been imployed) hath been trifled away. Now (*utrum horum*) Let me take which I please. If it be supposed all to have been employed, is it not most unreasonable, that worldly business and my body should have all, and Godland my soul have none; or
next

next to none? Did God make me for himself, and allot me such a measure of time for his glory and for provision for my soul, and are they only some few minutes, which I can find either for him or it? Was, I say, every day given me for these ends, And can I spend all without considerable seeking either, as I do if I allow nothing to private devotion? *Ought I not therefore to lessen my business, rather than neglect the great ends of my being?* If on the other side, a considerable part of my time were lost and trifled away (as I dare say infallibly it will appear upon due account taken) is not this a most unreasonable part in me, that I can find *time to loose*, and yet *no time to pray*. Part. II.
Chap. 2.

And further, Thirdly, it may somewhat quicken me, if I consider, that though it should be questioned whether it be strictly my duty *thus and thus oft to pray*, because there may seem to be wanting an express command, yet I cannot but be sensi-

28 A Method for

Part. II. ble that is my duty *to pray*, and to
 Chap. 2 *pray often*, (for this there are not
 wanting commands) and that there-
 fore prayer being a duty and well-
 pleasing unto God, the more there-
 of is performed, the more accepta-
 ble service do I do to God: pro-
 vided prayer thrust not out my o-
 ther duties, the frequency, I say,
 can never offend, except in the case
 of neglecting other duties to per-
 form it: and herein commonly
 men are not apt to be guilty. Sup-
 pose it therefore not to offend in this
 case, being that it is a duty, it must
 please, and please the more, by how
 much it self is more. Now this to-
 ingenuity is no mean incentive unto
 prayer, that hereby I please my God,
 and delight heaven.

Fourthly, let me consider, that
 as Prayer it self is the most power-
 ful and effectual means that a
 Christian can use for the effecting of
 all he would, so there is no prayer
 more powerful than that which is
 most frequent and importunate. In
 general

Private Devotion. 29

general, as to the power of prayer, it is such that it seems to have done violence to omnipotence it self; as in the case of *Moses* when God as though graciously held or restrained bids him *let him alone*: and in some cases, if duly performed; God hath as it were allowed it to command him. But what or whose prayers are they, which are thus powerful? Surely not theirs, who so seldom come to heaven, that if it were for nothing else, but because they are such strangers, they would not speed: but theirs rather, whose daily and frequent application of themselves to the throne of grace hath rendred them there well acquainted and favourites. We may therefore observe, that the most absolute and encouraging promises of being heard, are made to the importunate suitors. The widow in the parable, whom injustice it self could not deny, was such; and therefore sped because such, because she came so often. And that precept, each

Part. II.
 Chap. 2.

Exod. 32.
 10.

Isai, 48.
 2.

Luk. 13.

Part. II. gradation of which hath a promise
 Chap. 2. proportionably attemperated and
 fitted thereunto, as it prescribes, so
 chiefly encourageth importunity,
 that is, *frequency as well as fervency*.
 It is not said, onely *Ask*, nor only
Seek, but both, and *Knock* besides.

Mat. 7. 7. The last alone, viz. Knocking,
 implies frequency, and therefore
 much more do all the three. And
 to the *Knocking*, as being of all the
 three the clearest denotation or ex-
 pression of importunity, it is pro-
 mised *It shall be opened*: as if it had
 been said, those who only *ask* and
seek may come to *speed*: but those
 who *knock*, those who are oft and
 earnest in their prayers, shall have
 the treasures of heaven *opened* and
 free to them, out of which to take
 full satisfaction and supply.

Now because all these things
 are so, therefore can it not be, but
 that the benefit of such practice must
 be *unspeakable*, which as another
 (and for the present the last) incite-
 ment unto daily private devotion is
 worthy

Private Devotion. 31

worthy my consideration. *First*, as Part. I I.
Chap. 32
to the inward temper of my heart
(which rightly to dispose, and so
disposed to keep, is a matter of the
greatest concernment to an holy
life) there can be nothing thought
of more effectual, than such practise:
nor can it indeed well be conceived,
how that mans heart can be kept in a
thorow sence of his duty, and close
with God, who maintains not some
such daily course of devotion as is
under present consideration.

Secondly. The maintaining hereof will
keep alive in me a continual fear and
awful apprehension of God: It
will habituate me, in all my ways,
often to think upon and remember
him. Now there is nothing, the
apprehension of which is of more
wholesome consequence unto a man,
than of God, and his all-seeing eye.
One, who is sensible and mindful
hereof, cannot be long vain, but,
if he do forget himself at any time,
will soon return to his old serious-
ness.

Part. II. 2. Such practise will also much
 Chap. 2. conduce to the keeping of me humble,
 as being sensible of (because
 often minding) my sins: my sin-
 say from my youth up to my pre-
 sent years, my perpetual promise
 and frequent relapses unto vicious
 courses. These being matter of my
 daily confessions, thoughts and me-
 ditations, cannot but in some good
 measure keep under any towering or
 proud conceits, which I am apt to
 have of my self.

3. It will also make and keep me
 tender affectionate, and truly Zea-
 lous in my service of God. There
 will be in me an habitual preparati-
 on for all duties; insomuch that I
 can no sooner be at them, and have
 engaged my self in them, but with a
 great deal of vivacity and readiness
 of Spirit, and with many inward
 meltings of heart I shall converse in
 them: this being not onely my dai-
 ly but my frequent practise, at least
 frequent endeavour.

4. It must therefore much in-
 crease

crease all manner of Christian graces in my Soul; inasmuch as grace according as we now speak thereof, is nothing else but the due disposition and resolution of the soul, which as is evident will be the natural consequent and fruit of such practice.

Secondly, it will have a very wholesome influence upon my life, as in all cases else, so especially in this, that I shall at no time carry on any design which I dare not bring unto the test of heaven, and beg thereon the blessing of the God of Holiness.

Lastly, the mercies which I receive in my own person, in my relations, in all my affairs as procured and impetrated from God by these my daily and frequent prayers will be innumerable; and that inward comfort and clearness of heart, with which I shall entertain and receive these mercies, or any thing else, which comes from the hand of my gracious God, inexpressible. The same mercies evidently are not

Part. I. I. the same to all men, no more than
 Chap. 2. are the same chastisements. But to
 whomsoever mercies are greater
 mercies, or afflictions less afflictions,
 it cannot be, but that to him
 who thus conscientiously daily converseth
 with God, all must be most kindly.

Now the consideration of all, which
 I have thus meditated, cannot sure
 but move me to some measure of diligence
 in these duties. If therefore at any time
 negligence begin to grow over me, it may
 be of good effect to read over and duly to
 weigh these or the like motives, that I may
 be quickened to resume, and proceed with,
 my proposed course: and what that course
 should be, it follows in the next place that I
 consult.

Chap. III.

*Of the Substance of every days
private devotion; To per-
sons of leisure, Reading
Meditation and Prayer.*

THe private devotion of every day will be different to particular persons, according as their conditions differ. From such who are servants or lead a servile life (I mean all those who get their living by their daily labour, whose abilities of mind are therefore meaner and whose privacy more difficult) from such I say no more than this may seem to be expected, that both in the morning being risen, and at night being about to lye down, they in the feare of God fall down before him and pray unto him; touching which directions will anon follow.

From those, whose way of life being more liberal, their abilities

Part. I I. and opportunities are greater, more
 Chap. 3. may seem justly to be looked for,
 Luk 12. according to that rule, *To whom*
 48. *much is given, from them shall much*
be required. Speaking therefore to

such who have estates and leisure,
 and so may have opportune privacy, I
 suppose their daily private devotion
 cannot be compleat, except consisting
 of *Reading, Meditation and Prayer.*

Touching *private Prayer* it hath
 been before spoken, and nothing
 now can by such, whom the present
 consultation concerneth, be said for
 the dispensing with it, being it is e-
 ven their duty who are of meaner
 quality and capacity and therefore
 much more theirs, who are of great-
 er. Touching *Reading and Medi-*
tation, if any suspicion arise, it will
 easily be removed (1) by those com-
 mands, which enjoyn us, that we
Search diligently the Scriptures, that

John 5. *the word of God dwell plentifully in*
 3. *us, &c.* and (2) by such Characters
 of righteous persons, as that they are
 Coloss. 3. *such whose delight is in the Law of the*
 16. *Lord*

Lord, and who meditate therein day and night. And certainly such commands being capable to be intended or remitted (I mean being to be construed with some regard and according to, that general rule aforementioned (to whom much is given from him much shall be required,) cannot but be interpreted to require greater and more diligent *Searching* (that is more of *Reading* and *Meditating* upon) Scripture, from those, who have greater opportunity and ability to do it, than they doe from others who are meaner in both.

Of such an one therefore, who hath not time every day, or if he haply have, yet cannot read, it may be thought he dischargeth his duty of *searching the Scripture*, if in a way proportionable to his ability he endeavour to acquaint himself with Scripture, to wit, by a diligent attention to it and inquiring of it (as he hath conveniency) when it is read or preached. But of such an one,

Part. II one, who can *read* and hath time to
 Chap. 3. *meditate* on what he reads, and
 whom, it may be, it concerns to in-
 struct others in the knowledge of
 Scripture (as being over them) of
 such an one, I say, being that more
 is required, than of the other, it can-
 not in reason be thought, that he
 hath done his duty by bare attenti-
 on unto Scripture read, except he
 himself read and meditate therein.
 And he will very hardly (we may
 not feare to say, not at all) approve
 himself to be a Godly man, if he be-
 have not himself as Godly men did
 of old, that is, if he *delight not in the*
Law of the Lord, and therein daily
meditate. If I should doubt there-
 fore, whether it be strictly my duty
day and night, morning and evening
 to read the Scriptures and meditate,
 I cannot doubt (for I see plain evi-
 dence for it) that it is a Godly mans
 Character, one part of his practice
 as he is a Godly man, to *read* and
meditate: if therefore I intend to be
 a Godly man, it must be my care and
 practice too. Where-

Wherefore of these three, *Reading*, *Meditation* and *Prayer*, seeing that none may be well omitted (at least not ordinarily neglected) it is requisite more particular consideration be had.

Part. I I.
Chap. 4.

Chap. I III.

Of Reading the Holy Scripture. The most edifying method and manner of Reading it consulted of.

B*Y Reading* here I understand reading the sole word of God; and this as it should constantly (for the main at least, if not ever) have a place in my daily devotions in private, so therein, methinks, will most conveniently take place in the beginning of them, on this wise. Being entred into my *Closet* for my devotions sake, it becomes me first in all humility and out of the fear of God, not out of custom, to fall down

Part. 11 down before him, and in short
 Chap. 4. cording to former direction to beg
 his blessing upon me and presence
 with me there presenting my self to
 worship before his majesty: To
 which purpose the Form * already
 delivered may be proper either for
 * Part I. use, or further direction, according
 Chap. 3. as I shall see fit. This being done,
 forthwith let me apply my self to
 the reading some portion of the
 word, according to my prefixed
 course. And what course shall that
 be?

Modesty would presently answer,
 The same which the wisdom of the
 Church hath prescribed for publick
 use. And the truth is (the Church
 consulting herein, as she ought, the
 edification of the people) this order
 hath, in this point, the advantage of
 all other, that it will lead us to read
 over all the most useful parts of
 Scripture and those most frequently:
 to wit, the New Testament, except-
 ing onely some Chapters of the *Re-
 velation*, three times a year; the
Psalms

Psalmes once a month; the *Old* Part. II.
Testament (excepting onely the two Chap. 4.
books of *Chronicles*; which are for
the most part extant in the *Kings*
and *Samuel*, and some other Chap-
ters of other books, chiefly relating
to the *Irish* state once in a year. But
then if we consider its compliance
with our present designe, it hath
these two exceptions lying against
it. *First*, that the portions of Scrip-
ture, by that order to be read daily,
are greater than what every mans
or most mens conveniency will af-
ford time to read, and meditate up-
pon, as it is (supposed at present) best
for a devout Christian to do. And
then *Secondly*, that by this means a
considerable part of the *Old* Testa-
ment and some part of the *New* will
be left out; which parts are not,
questionless, without their use,
though comparatively, not so ne-
cessary for the publick commonalty
as the other. And to the Churches
prescription it may be said, that it
was never the Churches intention

Part. II. to prescribe this order for mens
 Chap 4 *Closets* in private, where she can
 neither take notice of their obser-
 ving nor neglecting it, but only for
 publick edification and uniformity.

This order therefore being taken
 not to be so proper for our present
 purpose, the next which will offer it
 self, will be the natural order of the
 books in which they lye. Now this
 though not liable to the exceptions,
 which we found against the former
 (being that nothing then will be o-
 mitted, nor the Reader overburden-
 ed with too great a portion, being
 he is left to himself) yet hath his
 inconveniency, that it will detain the
 observer of it a great while in those
 parts of Scripture, which may not
 edifie him so much, as would the o-
 ther: so that haply *Reading* shall be
 a duller and lesse spiritual an ex-
 ercise, than it would be, did he more
 wisely order it. Yet hath it this
 advantage also, that the *Revelations*
 of God and eternal life being still
 clearer in each succeeding part of
 Scripture

Scripture (I mean clearer in the *Pro-Part. 11.*
phets than in the *Law* and in the *Gospel* than in either) one months *Chap. 4.*
reading may make me see more in-
to that of the former month, and all
lead me to the magnifying of God
for the present manifest Revelation
of his will.

These things being so, it may hap-
py conduce most to our private edi-
fication if we keep strictly to neither
of these orders, but observing the
conveniences and inconveniences of
each to our private purpose, accord-
ing to our Christian discretion
frame to our selves one out of both,
which may have the commodities
of both, and incommmodity of nei-
ther. And that may be such as this :
To begin every Reading with a
Psalm, or, where the *Psalms* are
very long, with a good portion
of one, taking the *Psalms* in their
course: (This I therefore commend,
by reason of the exceeding useful-
ness of that book of *Psalms* for
prayer, it furnishing a man with
petitions

Part. II. petitions, hymns and ejaculations
 Chap 4 of all sorts, and besides discovering
 very much of the hearty practice of
Devotion and Godliness) That be-
 ing finisht, in the morning to take
 in order as the Books and Chapters
 lye, such a portion of the *Old Testa-*
ment, as my Christian prudence,
 considering my own conveniencies
 and occasions, shall judge fit: which,
 where the matter affords more
 work for *Meditation*, may be short-
 er; where less, larger. In like man-
 ner at evening, beginning with a
 like portion of the *Psalms*, take
 a part of the *New Testament*, as it
 lyes in order, greater or less, accord-
 ing as before said, it finds my devo-
 tion work. Some such course as
 this would I observe, till I had read
 over the *Holy Scripture* twice or
 thrice with such care, attention and
 meditation, as shall presently be de-
 scribed; by which time I should
 begin to be a little vers'd in it, and to
 know what parts of Scripture I used
 to read with greatest Christian ad-
 vantage

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Part. II.
Chap. 4.



antage, which therefore afterwards I would read oftner than the other; setting alwayes a mark at the name of each book, as they stand in the *Table* at the beginning of my Bible, when I had read that book over, that so I might know how often I had read each, lest I come too long to neglect the reading of any.

Psal. 25.
14.

This as to the *Order* of my *Reading*.

Having now my work thus orderly before me, it remains in the next place that I look to the best *manner* of doing it: whither belong the following rules.

First, that I endeavour to read with composedness of mind and attention, not only to the sence, substance, or subject matter of what I read, but as to the very expressions of it. For that the very expressions of Scripture are not only very useful in prayer (God loving to hear his children call upon him in his own language) but do also many times carry in them such secret emphases and force, as shall much comfort

PART. II. comfort, support, awe, and other
 Chap. 4. wise affect the heart which considers them.

Secondly, that I be sure, as I read, to observe the scope and drift of that portion of Scripture, which I read. For as to particular passages, it may so happen, that the plain Reader may many times scarce understand them, they puzzling even learned heads: but as to the scope of the whole, as to that which the *Holy Ghost* chiefly drives at, this may be commonly more easily understood: and this being understood doth not only ensure me of so much benefit as I have understood of it, but will give special light unto those darker places, whose meaning I do not so well conceive.

Thirdly, that if ever I intend this part of my devotion, to wit my *Reading*, should be acceptable to God, or otherwise than a witness against my self, I resolve upon the impartial practice of whatsoever I by reading find to be in Scripture
 com

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commanded, and eschewing of Part. II.
whatsoever I there find forbidden. Chap. 5.
Such godly purpose will encrease
my very knowledge; *For the secret*
of the Lord is with them that fear
him, and he will teach them his Sta-
tures: whereas others, who bring
not a resolution of such conscienti- Psal. 119.
ous practice, but barely inquisitive 14.
diligence, may come to be in a
greater measure ignorant of his
mind.

Chap. V.

Of Meditation, and the most
edifying course in it.

THese rules being thus observed,
and a certain portion of *Holy*
Scripture thus read, it will be proper
for me in the next place to proceed
to *Meditation*.

Now *Meditation* here I take not
for the simple thinking of anything
divine, which shall offer it self, but
for

Part. II. for an orderly and serious consideration of the particulars following.
 Chap. 5.

1. Upon that portion of Scripture which I have read.
2. Upon my own state and way.
3. Upon the prayers (that is, Confessions, Petitions and Thanksgivings) which I am presently to offer up unto God.

Touching the first there are these three things for me to consider.

First, If I have not, as I read, been able to understand the design and drift of the Holy Ghost in what I have read, let me consider touching that; and by a short review of what I have read, comparing the parts or several materials spoken of, and attending how they hang together, endeavour to comprehend their substance and scope. He reads to no purpose who reads not thus; for it is not repeating the words of Scripture but understanding and digesting their sense and substance which is to be accounted reading the Scripture: and one Chapter thus read is worth ten hastily run over. Se-

Secondly, If there be in what I Part. II.
 have read any difficult or harder Chap. 5.
 place, which seems to contain any
 matter of practice or article of faith
 (I mean which is likely to instruct
 me in any thing necessary to be be-
 lieved or done in order to my salva-
 tion) that let me consider, and
 endeavour thereof to find the mean-
 ing. As to those difficulties, which
 concern controversies, that is que-
 stionable Opinions in Divinity, or
 inquiries into matters of meer
 knowledge or speculation, (such
 things, which when they are known
 there is an end of them) these may
 be very well over-looked by an or-
 dinary person. As for instance;
 Reading *Acts* 13. (the last Para-
 graph or partition of the Chapter,
 which begins *verse* 44.) I find
 therein (*viz.* *verse* 48.) a certain
 difficult expression, *As many as*
were ordained unto life believed.
 What *believing* and what *life* (i. e.
 heaven and blessedness) mean I
 know? but what *ordained unto life*
 D means

Part. II. means, I doubt; and truly need not
 Chap. 5. much trouble my self to inquire.

~~~~~  
 Sufficient it is that I conclude from  
 thence, that *all they who shall obtain  
 everlasting life are believers* (not one  
 unbelieving or ungodly person shall  
 ever enter into heaven) and there-  
 fore particularly that I resolve upon  
 an honest cordial receiving of the  
 Gospel as my duty, if ever I intend  
 for happiness. Again, reading *Exo-  
 dus 32*. I find that *Moses took the  
 Calfs they had made and burned it in  
 the fire, and ground it to powder*. How  
 the burning gold in the fire, which  
 only purifies it ordinarily, should  
 come to make it friable or brittle,  
 that it might be ground unto pow-  
 der, I need not stand to inquire. A  
 shorter and better way it is, to be-  
 lieve the matter feasible, and this  
 relation true, as being part of Gods  
 word: all I need to conclude thence  
 is, that Idolatry is to be destroyed,  
 and that in such sort as the people  
 may not return to it again, but ra-  
 ther loath and abominate it, as we  
 do

## Private Devotion. 51

do that which passeth through our Part. II.  
bodies ( for which reason *Moses* Chap. 3.  
made the people to drink off the  
powder of the Calf: ) and that it is  
the wisdom of Magistrates, whom  
it concerns, to destroy it, as it was  
*Moses's*, to find out and contrive  
such ways or methods of destroy-  
ing it. This is I say as much as can  
concern any ordinary person, and  
as for the curiosity touched it may  
safely be neglected. We give not  
rules to make a Divine, but to di-  
rect a Christian. Now all such diffi-  
culties and curiosities being left out,  
I presume the difficulties which arise  
in practicable matters will be but  
few. And for my help herein, it  
will be meet I reflect upon that  
which ( according to the former  
rule ) I found to be the scope or  
drift of that Scripture, and consider  
the difficulty with some relation or  
regard thereto, observing the oc-  
casion, upon which that expression  
came in. This will help me very  
much many times. But for my fur-  
ther

Part. II. ther help therein, if I am able, it  
 Chap. 5. would be expedient I had some  
 short glosse, or book explaining  
 such matters: and truly what book  
 to pitch upon, as best in this case, is  
 not easie to resolve. For I suppose  
 there are not many books of notes  
 or Commentaries upon the whole  
 Bible in English, which meddle on-  
 ly with necessary and practicable  
 matters, omitting controversals,  
 which a private Christian, to his  
 better edification, may well spare.  
 For the *New Testament* I much ad-  
 mire Dr. *Hammonds* Paraphrase, and  
 could ten thousand times wish such  
 a piece were extant upon the whole  
 Scripture. But yet it is too difficult for  
 every plain Reader. Bishop *Hall* hath  
 a Paraphrase upon the whole Bible,  
 which comes much neerer to our  
 present design: But I feare this is  
 scarce the frequentest, best, and in-  
 nocentest that I know is *Diodati's*  
*Annotations*: they have indeed a  
*Geneva tang* now and then, but pret-  
 ty soberly. Some such book ac-  
 cording



## Private Devotion. 53

ording as I can get, I would furnish my self with, which I might consult touching the meaning of such difficult places as my Christian discretion should tell me to be practical, and for my necessary edification.

Part. II.  
Chap. 1.

*Thirdly*, Having thus found out the design of that whole portion of Scripture which I have read; and the meaning of such particular Texts as I shall have occasion to search into, let me in my meditations cast over again, or recollect the substance of it, and consider, what am I the better for the Reading hereof.

1. Am I instructed or further confirmed in any matter of faith?

2. Am I taught my duty which before I either was ignorant of, or neglected? Do I here find any precept or command which I never before took notice of, or had forgot, &c?

3. Is there any thing which may quicken me to any duty, in which I am slack, or deter me from any sin



Part. II. to which I am prone? Any threat-  
 Chap. 3. ning of Gods wrath? Any example  
 of his judgements? Any promise of  
 mercy? Any instance of blessings on  
 his diligent servants?

4. Is there any thing which may  
 strengthen me in any temptation,  
 comfort me in any affliction, dis-  
 trust? &c.

5. Is there any particular emphat-  
 ical or affectionate speech which  
 may at any time quicken me? Any  
 proper petition, confession, invoca-  
 tion, thanksgiving, or the like, which  
 may be of use to me in prayer, or  
 otherwise?

6. Is there any thing which I can  
 observe of the experiences of holy  
 men of old? any thing of the deceit-  
 fulness of sin? any thing, whence I  
 may learne better my own heart, ei-  
 ther as to what it is, or what it ought  
 to be?

Through such heads as these may  
 my meditations briefly run: which  
 heads till I am perfect in, it may not  
 be amiss to open this my book and  
 examine

# Private Devotion. 55

examine what I have read, accord- Part. II.  
ing to these directions laid down. Chap. 3.

And if I am able, I shall find it an incredible benefit, in the end of these my meditations to use my pen, whensoever by any reading I have gained any more remarkable benefit, and to register in one of my Paper books (reserved ever for this purpose, which for distinctions sake I may know by the name of my *Memorial*) that particular which I have gained: in which I need to observe no other method, but only to write all the notes which I take out of any one book, as of *Matthew, Mark &c.* together, that so at my second or third reading that particular book over, I may see, what the second or third reading of it advantaged me more than the first. And these notes thus taken, because intended as helps to my memory, I must be sure to find time within a convenient season to review. This is a profitable course for me to observe in my ordinary

Part. II. nary meditations upon the holy  
Chap. 5. Scriptures.

The next thing which my meditations are to be employed upon, is upon my particular *State* and *Ways*, which I am in some measure to take notice of, as well that I may be more circumspect in such particulars, wherein I shall find greater need of circumspection, as that I may be able to address my self to God in a way suitable to my condition. For *my condition varying, my prayers ought to vary accordingly.*

First then, as to my *Ways*, that is Thoughts, Words and Deeds, (for all these the Scripture compriseth under that one term of our *Ways*.) These all know to be either good or bad. And as to both, I am to look both backward, and forward.

1. I am to look back and consider with my self what new temptations have befallen me, how far my heart hath closed with them and been overcome by them. (1) As to matters of *Commission*, whether  
of

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Part. II  
Chap. 5

of inward sins, such which are acted in the mind (as evil Thoughts, Desires, Resolutions or Designs) or of outward and bodily acting; as Words and Deeds. Hath not my discourse been Untrue, Unflavoury, Haughty, Passionate, or the like? my actions Ungodly, Dishonest, Uncharitable; contrary to Sobriety? And (2) as to *Omission*. Have I left nothing undone which I was to have done, which I had resolved to do, and had opportunity for? All this, as far as present convenience will admit, being duly considered, is seriously to be laid open before God in my following Prayers, both as to confession thereof, and supplication for pardon and future grace against such miscarriages.

In like manner if in review of my late ways I find through Grace, my Soul to have been considerably taken up with good thoughts, desires, or studies, my discourse to have brought Glory to God, or edification and quickening to my self or

D 5 others;

Part II. others; my actions commendable  
 Chap. 5. and such, which through Christ I  
 hope are acceptable to God; I am  
 to bless God for his preventing and  
 assisting grace, acknowledging with  
 St. Paul the whole, even mine own  
 labours and industry to have flown  
 from that Fountain. *By the grace  
 of God, saith he, I am what I am.  
 I laboured more abundantly than they  
 all, yet not I but the grace of God  
 which is in me.*

1 Cor. I 5

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2. Forward too I am to look  
 (especially in my morning medita-  
 tion, and before such times in which  
 any more considerable work or im-  
 ployment awaits me,) and consider  
 (1) what opportunities I may have  
 of doing service to God, or good to  
 man, (2) what temptations to any  
 sin my approaching business or com-  
 pany probably will bring with it,  
 and not only in my resolutions to  
 prepare and arm my self according-  
 ly for the embracing, and with my  
 utmost might doing my duty, and  
 withstanding the sin; but also in my  
 prayers

prayers suitably implore Divine strength and aid. Part. II.  
Chap. 5.

Many such thoughts as these a serious Christian who useth to employ time to his best advantage, will entertain while he is putting on his clothes in the morning, or outwardly taken up in any like necessary acts. This as to meditation upon my ways.

Secondly, As to my present *Inward state*, the temper of my mind: Let me examine that; whether I find any relentings or meltings of heart for those my wandrings, which I have before viewed, any firmness and resolution for the future against the like: Accordingly I am to apply my self to God in prayer, either for the giving me a due sense of, and remorse for, and resolution and watchfulness against my sin, or for the heightning and strengthening those degrees hereof, which I already have.

Thirdly as to my *Outward state*; Let me consider, how Gods holy provi-

Part II.  
Chap. 5.

providence hath either favoured or crossed my ordinary affairs and designs: for accordingly still I am to address my self unto God in prayer, either by praising him for my successes, or bewailing those sins and omissions which I may judge have blasted them, or otherwise, as my Chraistin discretion shall suggest.

All which heads of self-examination and Meditation, if, because lying here at some distance, I cannot alwayes readily in my memory run through without confusion or omission, it may be expedient to have them summ'd up into short questions, which I may turn to dally upon occasion, and put each to my soul to be answered unto, upon enquiry made into my own conscience.

1. *What sin committed by.* { Thought?  
Word?  
Deed?

2. *What duty omitted as to.* { Thought?  
Word?  
Deed?

3. *What*



3. *What grace or virtue acted in* { Thought? Part. II.  
Word? Chap. 9.  
Deed? }

4. *How hath God dealt with me in his providences, and what in me occasioning such dealings?*

5. *What temper of mind am I now in, considering mine own late carriage, and Gods providences towards me?*

6. *What temptations to sin* { am I this  
7. *What opportunities of virtue* { day likely to  
meet with?

The last head upon which my meditations are to be employoed; in my *Prayers*, which I am now about to offer up unto God: in which if I use a set form, I am to consider where those new particulars of confession, petition or praises which by examination of my self and condition, I have found necessary must come in; after what sort they may be conveniently expressed; and sometimes



Part. II. times (when my condition requires  
Chap. 5. and my time will permit me to be  
more large or earnest in any part of  
prayer) with what arguments I may  
strengthen my faith and plead with  
God touching what I desire to  
speed for; or again with what cir-  
cumstances of my sins, or Gods  
mercies I may heighten my repen-  
tance for my sins, or thankfulness for  
those mercies. If I do not use my  
self to a set form, then will it be  
necessary that I more deliberately  
meditate what I intend to confess,  
to ask, to praise God for, how I  
shall so call upon him or conceive of  
him, as may suit with those main  
and principal addresses, which I am  
to make to him. Whether every  
particular expression, or the just  
words be forethought, it haply mat-  
ters not very much: but that some  
fit significant proper and quickning  
expressions, for the several parts  
and substantials of my prayer, be  
prepared, it is expedient, as well for  
the greater readiness of the soul in  
prayer.

prayer, which when it is much to **Part. II.**  
seek in this case, cannot do its duty **Chap. 6.**  
with attention, nor without disturb-  
ance and intermission of due affe-  
ction, as also that nothing unworthy  
of the nature of prayer, and the  
Worship of God may be offered  
up unto him. And in this point it  
may be singularly helpful to consi-  
der, what of those expressions, pro-  
mises, narratives, experiences, &c.  
which I have at any time read in  
the Word of God, may be useful  
to me in those my intended addres-  
ses to the Throne of Grace. God  
(as already intimated) loves to hear  
his own-language from us; and so  
it is; that the very expressions of  
Scripture have a marvelous affecting  
power upon the devout heart, be-  
yond those, which seem not to  
have been alike sanctified by the  
Holy Ghost using them.

## Chap. VI.

*Of Prayer, and first of its substance and parts.*

What I have read being thus digested by *Meditation*, and by the like meditation, preparation being made for *Prayer*, that now remains as the third and most compleat act of my daily devotion: touching which, besides the precepts already given, others yet remain to be given, when the consideration of the nature of the duty hath a little made way for them.

Now *Prayer* is, a seeking unto God, and before him representing our *Estates and Desires*.

The general nature of prayer is a betaking or addressing our selves to God: and therefore its first act is *Invocation* or calling upon him. Now our condition, who are *dust* and

## Private Devotion. 65

and *asbes*, and his Majesty being Part. II.  
Chap. 6.  
considered, we cannot well be esteemed to seek unto him without adoration or worshiping of him in the beginning of these our addresses; for that in all seeking to Superiors we ever begin with some acknowledgments of their being above us, able to help us, &c. upon which accounts we use ordinarily some testimonies of reverence towards them. But God being infinitely above us, the self-existent and Almighty Fountain of our being, and the most gracious Author and bestower of all comforts, upon whom we daily live, the reverence which we bear, and express to him ought to be advanced to the highest pitch possible. Now the acting and giving the greatest reverence and honour that we can with soul and body, do I call *Adoration*. If we therefore put both these together, we have the first part of *Prayer*, to wit, *An invocatory adoration of God, that is an humble calling upon him,* accom-

Part. II. accompanied with worshipping and  
 Chap 6. adoring his infinite Majesty. And  
 this in most compleat prayers extant  
 in Scripture we may observe: par-  
 ticularly in that for ever to be reve-  
 renced pattern, our Lords Prayer,  
 the first sentence contains what we  
 speak of. (*Our Father*: this is a  
 calling upon God. *Which art in  
 Heaven*; these are words befitting  
 one who adores his Majesty. ) So  
 in that prayer of *Hezekiah*, *Isaiah*  
 xxxvii. 16. *O Lord of Hosts, God  
 of Israel, that dwellest between the  
 Cherubims; thou art God, even thou  
 alone, &c.* How evidently doth this  
 beginning of his prayer carry in it an  
*Invocation* ( or calling upon ) God,  
 accompanied with the acknow-  
 ledgement and adoration of his  
 Deity.

The first part of prayer we ga-  
 thered out of those words ( expres-  
 sing its general nature ) it is a *seeking  
 unto God*. The second we may ga-  
 ther out of them, which follow, it  
 is a *representing our estate before him*.  
 Our

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Our *estates* naturally are *sinful* and *miserable*. So far forth as we retain any thing of our old nature, so far are sin and misery inseparable adjuncts or attendants unto us. The representing therefore our estates before God is the *confessing our sins*, and *laying open our grievances and wants* before him. A second part of prayer then is *Confession*.

Part. II.  
Chap. 6.

That which all *sinners* should desire is *pardon*: that which all *miserable* persons do naturally desire is *help*. The representing then our desires before God is the *begging mercy and grace to help in time of need*; that is,

1. Pardon of sin.
2. Deliverance from our misery.  
*Internal*, by the sanctification of our hearts, and growth in grace.  
*External* by meet supplies of our outward wants.

A third act of prayer therefore is,  
*Petition or Asking.*

Some-

Part. II. Somewhat more yet is consider-  
 Chap 6. able in *our states* here below, which  
 though naturally miserable, as afore-  
 said, yet are by the manifold Grace  
 of God made in several respects  
*more comfortable by reason of va-*  
*riety of blessings.* Now he that re-  
 ceives a *benefit* ought to have at the  
 least a will and desire of *thankful-*  
*ness.* He therefore who duly repre-  
 sents his state and desires unto God,  
 layes open also before him those se-  
 veral mercies which at his hands he  
 receives. humbly blessing and prai-  
 sing him the Author of them. The  
 last part of prayer then is *Thanks-*  
*giving.*

Now because all these may be  
 done either for our selves or others,  
 therefore is prayer double, or of  
 two sorts.

That which meerly respects our  
 selves.

That which we offer up for others,  
 called *Intercession.*

From all this it is evident; that  
*the first thing, which he, who would*  
*learn*



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man to pray, must take care of, is, Part. II.  
Chap 6.  
that he thoroughly know himself, that  
is, (1.) Be acquainted with his own  
state, with his sins, his miseries and  
wants, inward and outward; other-  
wise he can never duly represent  
them unto God. (2.) That he well  
know his own desires and resoluti-  
ons, least he play the hypocrite with  
God, asking what he desireth not, or  
vowing what he intends not. These  
are the substantials of prayer.

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## Chap. VI.

*Of the right manner of prayer. First, of its inward manner. Some considerations to quicken to sincerity and heartiness in Prayer. What graces are to be exercised in each part of Prayer.*

**T**He manner of the performing every duty is much looked upon by God. Now prayer being such an immediate act of worship, and it being most just, reasonable, and necessary that we should worship God with the whole man, that is, both with soul and body, in the *manner of prayer* there can be only considerable, its Inward and Outward part.

The *inward* manner of prayer is unquestionably most respected by  
God:

God: for that according hereunto Part. II.  
 is the prayer, and the man, sincere Chap. 7.  
 or otherwise. And the Considera-  
 tion hereof should incite us chiefly  
 to care herein. I may pray in as good  
 and as many words, in as devout  
 postures, and, in a word after as pi-  
 ous a sort, as to what there is out-  
 ward in prayer, as ever man did, and  
 yet be hypocritical in my prayers.  
 But it is impossible, that I should  
 pray with my *Soul* and all that is  
*within me*, and not be cordial, ho-  
 nest and sincere in those prayers  
 which I so make. And therefore as  
 God doth, so, I say, every Christi-  
 an ought to look chiefly to the in-  
 ward disposition of his soul in his  
*Devotions.*

We may note further for our  
 quickening herein, that God not  
 onely *requireth* the heart in prayer,  
 but *hath accepted* and often *doth ac-*  
*cept* the inward breathings of it, and  
 answer them as fully, as if all other  
 circumstances belonging to the out-  
 ward manner of prayer had been  
 observed.

Part. II. observed. As in the case of *Hannah*, who in that so successful and effectual prayer of hers *spoke in her heart only*.

1 Sam. i.

13.

Now prayer is then right as to its inward manner, when there is an hearty exercise of Christian graces and affections suitable to the substance of the prayer, which we offer up to God, (That is to say, to go through the parts of prayer.) *I adore and call upon God as I ought*, when in my calling upon him, I really *believe* that he is, and that he is such that he hath revealed himself to be, and as I now express or conceive him, and therefore *with reverence humbly submit* my self before his Majesty. It is a piece of holy skill worthy taking notice of, which is observeable in the prayers of holy men in Scripture. They usually so frame their invocations or callings upon God, as may suit with their main business at the Throne of grace and strengthen their faith for those particular mercies which they ask.

Thus

Thus in that forenamed prayer of Part. II. *Hezekiah's* against the *Assyrian* Chap. 7. Armies. *O Lord of Hosts* (for he prayed against a mighty host, and for deliverance from it.) *God of Israel* (he therefore so calls God, to put him in mind of his covenant with *Israel*, that he might stretch forth his hands for the deliverance of his own people) *who dwellest between the Cherubims* (that is, who hast here recorded thy name and promised to meet and bless, and from thy mercy seat to answer, thy people. He therefore makes mention of Gods promised presence, or dwelling between the Cherubims, that he might prevail with God to save that City, where his Temple and this his mercy-Seat was placed.) Every expression in this his invocation hath somewhat in it proper to his suit, and of force to strengthen his faith and dependance upon God that he might the more surely prevail. In short then the graces to be exercised in adoration or calling

E

upon

Part. II. upon God chiefly are, *Faith, Fear, or*  
 Chap. 7. *Reverence of God, and Humility.*

I then *confess* my self to God as I ought when with *heartly sorrow* and *repentance* (which if earnest will be accompanied with a kind of *indignation* against my self) I lay open impartially my sins before him, not sparing the sweetest or closest: and with an *humble sense* of my own vileness, impotency and emptiness acknowledge my wants or his just judgements upon me for any of my sins. So that the chief grace to be exercised peculiarly in confession is *repentance* and *Godly sorrow*, an humble and tender sence of what we confess, accompanied with *shame* of our selves, and abhorrency of our sins, and, if occasion require, justifying God,

*Psal. 51.*  
 4.

Further then I *aske* as I ought when, as sensible of mine own unworthiness, out of an *humble trust* in God, through the merits of his Son, (which trust his gracious promises and declarations of good will through

through him, by me ever had respect Part. II.  
 to, do encourage me to take up) Chap. 7.

I heartily desire what I aske at his hands : or at least am heartily sorry, if I cannot say I heartily desire all I ask. Now because while I am asking, it so commeth to pass, that I often intermix somewhat of vow, as in asking the pardon of some past sins, many times I engage to diligent and watchful opposition for the future against them, therefore it is necessary that, if I would ask aright, I ask with *resolution and purpose of endeavouring a new life.* And further for that I cannot expect forgiveness from God, except I forgive from my heart my brethren, therefore I must aske in *charity.* So then the graces chiefly to be exercised in Petition are, First, *Faith* or an humble trust and hope in God through *Jesus Christ* that I shall speed (which is most truly *Praying in his name.*) Secondly, *Love* towards God and holiness. Thirdly a steadfast *purpose of obedience*, which is the

Part. II. most considerable part of repentance, Fourthly, *Charity* towards my Brethren.

Lastly, I then *praise* or give God thanks for his mercies as I ought, when I have an *inward acknowledgment* and *sence* that it is from him alone, and through his meer favour, that I enjoy these mercies, and when, not only I my self do *admire*, but desire that heaven and earth may admire him for his goodness: when also I do all this with a *resolution of improving* the mercy given, that is, of walking as it becometh one, who hath been vouchsafed of such a blessing. So that the graces to be exercised in thanksgiving chiefly are, 1. *Humility*, or a sence of our own unworthiness, and of Gods free mercy and grace, the onely fountain of all received or hoped for benefits. 2. *Love*, or an admiration of his goodness accompanied with a desire that he may receive all possible glory for it. 3. *Resolution* and *study* of greater and more suitable



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suitable obedience and duty to him. Part. II.  
Chap. 8.

These are those graces, in the exercise of which, the due inward manner of prayer, or a *praying temper*, consists: a composition so amiable, as that it will ever where it is, send up an odour of a sweet savour unto Heaven, and delight, shall I say, or overcome, the Almighty Majesty.

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### Chap. VIII.

*Of the best outward manner of Prayer, in fit postures and fit words. Of praying by gift, and the inconveniences alledg-  
able against it. Of praying by a form, and the inconveniences alledgable against it. An accommodation and reconciliation of both.*

**I**N the outward manner of prayer the chief points considerable are,



Part. II. the use of fit *postures* and meet  
Chap. 8. *words.*

Now though the posture of the body seem to be a small matter, yet me thinks my prayers want their due solemnity, if not performed in a posture of worship. True it is, many a devout prayer a man may make riding upon his horse back, walking in the fields, and the like: and right Christian is it thus to sanctifie my necessary journeys, or the time which otherwise would be wholly lost in travel, or stoln away by such recreatory obambulation. But these are occasional, and not my set and solemn devotions. Here my body being otherwise necessarily imployed, the most which I can give to God is my soul: or if to my thoughts my words be added, it is as much as well can be. But in my fixt course of devotion, it is not to be supposed that I worship God (*alind agens*) imployed with any thing but his worship: and therefore herein let my body, as well as my

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my ſoul, be taken up in meet acts of Part. II.  
worſhip. Now that I account to Chap. 3.  
be the beſt poſture of worſhip, which  
beſt expreſſeth an inward reverence  
of that Majeſty, to whom I addreſs  
my ſelf, who having *fearfully made*  
my body, and to this day *wonder-*  
*fully upheld and preſerved it,* and  
( which is infinitely more ) *redeemed*  
even my very body to immortality  
by the body and blood of his Son,  
hath obliged it, as well as my ſoul,  
to all poſſible homage. And it is to  
be obſerved that St. *Paul* ſeems to  
ſpeak ( chiefly if not only ) of pri-  
vate and his daily devotion, when  
he ſaith, *I bow my knees to the God*  
*and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*  
What was his therefore, let it be my  
practice, as often as I thus pray, to  
bow my knees: and ( if to no other  
end, but that I may be ſure to mind,  
that they be holy and *without wrath* )  
let me add the *liſting up of hands.*  
Other poſtures may be ſometimes  
neceſſary in our ſolemn humiliati-  
ons, or more earneſt deprecations of

Ephes. 3.  
14.

1 Tim. 2.  
8.

Part. II. any imminent evil; such as is *Prostra-*  
Chap. 8. *tion*, or casting my self on the earth  
before God: to which pious dis-  
cretion will easily in their season  
direct.

As to matter of words or the  
forms of prayer, this age hath seen  
more controversie, and that in *Eng-*  
*land* alone, then all ages from the  
beginning of the world have known  
all the world over. Touching which  
matter I say only, that the nature  
of prayer being as before said, a  
*seeking unto God by way of adoration,*  
*confession, petition, and praise*, if we  
do this with honest hearts and sui-  
table affections, whether the words  
in which we utter our selves, be our  
own or an others; whether they be  
forethought or sudden, (provided  
they fitly and reverently express  
the inward sence of our hearts) it  
mattereth not, nor is it at all  
essential unto *Prayer*. For the  
full essence of Prayer is com-  
plete, such an address being made  
inwardly by my soul, and outward-  
ly

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ly thus expressed by my tongue and body: and be the words whose they will, my praying them (that is, offering them up to God) with an heart suitable to them, hath made them as much mine, as if I had invented, contrived, dictated or pend them at the first. I think therefore, if men would be sober and peaceably minded, this need not make either a stirre in the World, or move any scruple to a Christians conscience.

I profess my self no whit guilty of undervaluing the free effusions of the soul before God (in private especially) in such expressions as the affected and moved mind suggests, or as the spirit gives utterance. But in my daily private devotions to use perpetually such a loose and arbitrary way, I think hath these inconveniences. *First*, that (by reason sometimes of the coldness, dulness, and heedlessness of my heart; other times by reason of distractions, incumbrances, and the like almost un-

E 5      avoidable

Part II.  
Chap. 8.

avoidable mischiefs) my devotions will be too often slightly slubberd over, perfunctorily and disorderly performed: Whereas had I a mature and well composed prayer before me; which I use wholly to offer up to God, all would be much more substantial: and though haply my heart may have been in these my prayers too too dead (as it was likely/perhaps to have been, had I prayed otherwise, for such or such a season) yet shall I not prove guilty of such idleness, negligence, and slightiness as otherwise I should have been guilty of. And such infirmities, which are incident to us by reason of our present frailty and state, God is likely the more easily to pity and pass by, when he sees that, though we are more indisposed than ordinary, yet are we no whit less diligent. Secondly, another inconvenience thereby may oftentimes be, The omission of many things necessary to be confessed, asked, or returned thanks for; not so much through

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through negligence, dulness, &c. (as Part. II. before,) as incogitancy and unavoidable forgetfulness. Our ordinary wants and spiritual concerns we may come not to mind, either at all, or as we ought, through much being intent on some other pressing (outward) evils. Common experience will easily satisfy a Christian herein, who is but vers'd in the practice of what we speak of. Have I not many times kneeled down before God with an intention to ask such things which by reason of my earnest asking somewhat else, I have forgotten to ask before I arose? and hath not the reason been the meer following extemporary suggestion? Let it be considered.

Again, on the other side, to use always a certain and constant form of words, seems to have these inconveniences. *First*, that we having almost daily new sins to confess, new wants to beg a supply of; these by such course shall be omitted, or only  
lightly

Part II.  
Chap. 8.

lightly and generally toucht, at least not so particularly and affectionately pressed and insisted upon as they ought. 2. Besides sometimes haply I would spend more time in prayer than at another time. Now if my prayers be always the same, I cannot, *except* (as Papists are reported to do their *Credoes* and *Ave Marias*) I should run over and over the same again. 3. Further, frequent use may breed dulness, as some may think.

These being the inconveniencies of both cases, and each case besides having advocates (or persons that love and plead for them) even amongst the common people, it will be best to move for an *Accommodation*: And that may be on this wise.

The inconveniences of the former case may be avoided, by the having a certain good plain and full form of prayer, which we well understand, and by usually tying our selves hereto: not so as, 1. to think  
our



our work is done by the prayer Part. II.  
being said; for that were to neg- Chap. 9  
lect the most necessary part in the  
manner of rayer, to wit, the inward  
address and application of the heart  
to God, contrary to former rule: nor  
so, 2. as not to alter for this or that  
time, any expression as God may  
move our hearts in prayer, or insert  
any new thing as we have need: but  
only so, 1. as to ensure my self that  
my devotions and prayers be sound  
and compleat, that I offer not to God  
the *halt and the lame*: & so, 2. as to  
keep my mind fixt and constant to its  
business, intent upon all its spiritual  
concerns.

And again the inconveniences  
of the latter case will be avoided  
hereby, that we have not supposed  
the form upon occasion altogether  
unalterable, as abovesaid, but rather  
to have its fit and proper places,  
wherein we may insert or put in  
the *confession* of new sins, with  
their proper aggravations, as also  
fit places for the adding of any new  
matter



Part. II. matter of *Petition* or *Thanksgiving*,  
Chap. 8. as there shall be occasion. And to

the last inconvenience of this second case, it may be said, that Use cannot beget dulness, if the prayer thus supposed to be framed, be used, according to former precepts, with *Reading* and *Meditation* before it, which exercises will have in a good measure quickened the heart for prayer. And as for such more solemn seasons when we would spend more time with God in prayer, we need not so to tie our selves to these our ordinary devotions; those which at such seasons we intend being already supposed more than ordinary. We may be larger in the confession of sin, more particular in its aggravation, more earnest for such and such mercies as we want, &c. according as we shall see occasion: and either use the groundwork and substance of those our usuall prayers, with such amplifications as we shall judge meetest, or for that time, instead of them, use  
such

such other prayers as we shall find Part. II.  
Chap. 9  
best to suit with our temper and  
occasions; for the preparation of  
which prayers directions will here-  
after be given.

In the mean time for better understanding and comprehending the precepts given, as also for the supply of such who may haply be scarce able to frame to themselves such a form, it may not be amiss to subjoyn one for morning, and another for evening, framed according to the former rules.

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### Chap. IX.

*A Form of Prayer made according to the former accommodation, which may be used in our morning Privacy.*

**T**He Christian then having read and meditated as before directed

Part. II And let him reverently kneel down,  
 Chap. 9 lifting up his hands and eyes, but  
 ~~~~~ *most surely his heart* to Heaven,  
 and say,

O Almighty and most blessed God, Lord of heaven and earth, who makest the out-goings both of morning and evening, and by whose good hand upon me thy creature, I am awaked out of my lad nights sleep, and being risen, here present my self before thee: I humbly bow to thee my knees, and therewith my heart and soul, and desire with all that is within me to adore thy blessed Majesty.

But most unworthy, and of my self most unsufficient, am I to perform unto thee any
 wor

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Part. II.
Chap 9.
worship or service. What is
dust and ashes, (and such am I
if I were innocent) to take
upon it to speak unto the
Lord! But I, O God, am a
guilty wretch, one whom it
becometh to stand afar off,
and shame covering my face,
to cry *Vnclean Vnclean*. My
soul is naturally over-run with
lusts as with an vniversal Le-
prosie: there is no free part
of me. My life is as vniversally
corrupt as mine heart: My
childhood and youth have not
only been vanity, but sin: I
have done nothing else therein
but fulfilled the desires of my
flesh and mind. My corruptions
have only grown with me:
and my sins since become so
much the more sinful, by how
much the more knowlege I
have

Part. II.
Chap. 9. have had of thy will, and
strength and engagements to
have performed it.

¶ Of 4. To this very day, as indeed
final sins. I ever have done, I daily break
thy holy Laws in thought,
word and actions, by choosing

* Here confess a- what thou hast for-
ny particular or bidden, and neglect-
fresh sin commit- ing what thou hast
ted, or duty negle- commanded. *** In
cted, which in thy all my ways I most
examination of miserably transgress.
thy self thou hast
found. My very t sleep it self,

Remember in
the use of these or
any such words to
reflect in thy
thoughts upon any
particulars which
thy conscience tells
thee, they may fit-
ly represent to God
touching thee. O Lord, is not inno-
cent. Nor is it thus
only in the common
and more ordinary a-
ctions of my life.
Those few good deeds
which I do, have ma-
ny, not only t infir-
mities, but sins in
them :

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them: and I have need to re-
pent of my very righteousness
[of my † * * * .] I therefore so
desire to do: and am here
come before thee, as thou hast
commanded me, to confess my
sin unto thee, with hopes, ac-
cording to thy promise; that I
shall find mercy, I have, O
God, confessed to thee, as I am
able.

Part II.
Chap. 2.

Petition
1 For our
selves.

Now Mercy, Mercy, let me
find with thee, through Christ
Jesus my Saviour. Remember
that attonement, which he
made by the Blood of his
Cross: In those streames
thoroughly wash away my filth:
By those Wounds let me be
healed; and by his Death let
me attain a blessed *
immortality, (* *) me obtaine the
And send down thine pardon of.*

holy

Part II. holy Spirit abundantly into
 Chap. 9. mine heart, which may renew
 Me throughout according to
 thine Image, healing all the
 naughty inclinations of my
 soul, and begetting in me
 an hearty love unto holiness,
 and a constant feare of thee my
 God, that I may have respect
 unto all thy Commandments,
 and walk before thee all my
 daies with a perfect heart.
 Quicken me also by the same
 thy good Spirit to give all di-
 ligence in every duty (*and*
*especially in ***) that I may
 grow in grace, and in thy fa-
 uour, and daily come nearer
 unto salvation and thee. And
 forasmuch as I my self am un-
 stable as water, preserve me
 by thy power through Faith,
 that I fall not from my integri-
 ty,

ty, nor depart wickedly from thee my God. Especially keep thy servant from his iniquity, (or his iniquities of * * *) and make me most watchfull against all those * ocn

casions and wiles of fin, by which I have been formerly insnared. My outward condition, during all the daies of my pilgrimage here on earth, do thou order to thy glory and my own good: and, if it may be thy holy Will, grant that it may be so far quiet and prosperous, as that I may serve thee chearfully and without distraction.

Be gracious also, O Lord, unto thine holy Church, and to this Church especially.

Watch

Part. II
Chap. 9.

* Here thou mayst have many private and proper reflections: and so generally where-soever the same mark is set.

2. For others.

Part II. Watch over us daily for good:
 Chap. 9.

*Remem-
ber parti-
cular re-
flections
and, if
need, men-
tions.*

and be pleased to bless and preserve the Kings Majesty, his Queen, and all the Royal Family. Grant that all Magistrates may be faithful both to thee and to their Prince and Country in their trust: and that all Ministers of what degree soever, may be sober, watchful, fervent and successful in thy work. Let the whole Nation, and especially this neighbourhood grow in the true knowledge and feare of thee. Visit with thy grace † and blessing all my † Relations, my † Friends and † Benefactors. Forgive and reconcile both to thy self and me all mine † enemies. Comfort, relieve, and in thine own good time deliver (all thy servants
 † who

Private Devotion. 95

† who are in any distress in- Part I L.
Chap. 9.
ward or outward, and sanctifie
both to them and me all thy
dealings, causing all things in
the end to work together for
good, according to thy infi-
nite Power and Wisdome,
whereby thou over-rulest all
events.

For which thy gracious *Thanks-
giving.*
administration of the whole
course of Nature, and the mul-
titude of blessings appertain-
ing both to this life and that
which is to come, which thy
providence incessantly heaps
upon all mankind, and parti-
cularly upon me thy most un-
deserving servant, for ever
blessed be thy holy Name. E-
specially may Heaven and
Earth ever praise thee, for the
redemption of the world by
thy

Part II.
Chap. 9.

thy Son; and the knowledge of thee, through him, revealed in thy Word; and the mighty workings of thy Spirit thereby. And be thou pleased to accept of that praise which thy servant hereby returns thee (as great as he can) for them all; and particularly, for this last nights refreshings, together with the comfortable restoring him to the enjoyment of day. Grant me thy special Grace, that I may spend my time to thy Glory, and may be all the day long in thy feare. Keep me that I fall into no sin, nor run into any danger. And accept thou this my morning service, and together me, who here devote myself to thee, through my Saviour Christ Jesus, in whose
Name

Private Devotion. 97

Name I further pray, as by Part. II.
Chap. 10.
him taught, when I pray, to

say, *Our Father, &c.*

Chap. X.

*A form of Prayer, made as the
other, which may be used in
our evening Privacy.*

IN like manner the Christian ha-
ving entred his *Closet* with some
such ejaculatory or short prayer, as
before directed to, and having read
and meditated as in the morning,
may, I presume, very profitably, use,
with such alteration, as his condition
shall require, and his discretion di-
rect, the ensuing Prayer.

O Most Holy and Graci-
ous Father, the search
F of

Part II.
Chap. 10.

of all hearts; who liest my down-lying as well as up-rising, darkness and light being both alike to thee; who art near unto all my ways; and espyest my thoughts while they are yet afar off. I have here set my self before thee to pay my evening homage, and desire to present both my soul and body (as is most due) a living Sacrifice to thee my God, who hast made and redeemed both.

Confession
1. Of ha-
bitual
corrup-
tion.

But most unfit, O Lord, are they to be to thee presented, every part of both being naturally corrupt and abominable, and nothing in me free from the loathsome defilement of sin. My soul by nature is desperately wicked, and all its powers perverse and bent upon evil:

My mind alienated from thee Part. II.
 through the ignorance that is Chap. 19
 within me: My affections un-
 ruly and masterless: My will
 full of enmity to thy Law, and
 enslaved to the service of di-
 vers lusts and pleasures. And
 as to my body, in iniquitie, O
 Lord, was I shapen, and in sin
 did my Mother conceive me:
 And ever since, have all my 2. Of all-
 nal sin.
 members been servants unto
 iniquity and instruments of
 wickedness. With my whole
 man have I obeyed the Law
 of sin, and fulfilled the desires of
 my flesh and corrupt mind. I
 scarce can think of that sin, in
 which I have not had my
 hands one part of my time or
 other. In sin, O God, have I
 spent not only my vainer age
 and the dayes of my ignorance,

Part. II.
Chap. 10.

but my ripeſt years, and thoſe
of full'eſt diſcretion, which I
have yet attain'd to: Since the
light of thy Goſpel hath ſhone
into my opened eyes, ſince thou
haſt touch'd my heart with a
ſence of that evil, which there
is in ſin, ſo wicked and perverſe
a ſervant have I been, that
knowing my Lords will I have
both neglected to do accord-
ingly, and preſumptuouſly
done contrary unto it. To the
very preſent time, O Lord
how ſ frequently, and how
ſ ſadly do I backſlide? What
ſ liberty do I allow my ſelf?
How ſ heedleſs do I con-
verſe? I walk at a meer per-
adventure with thee my God.
Notwithſtanding all my vows
and promiſes of watchfulneſs
unto obedience, this very day
how

Private Devotion. 101

how little hath thy feare been Part. II.
in my heart! and from hence Chap. 10
comes it to pass that I have so
miserably departed

from thee (by ***) * *Here confess*

With what stripes any of the mis-
therefore do I de- carriages of the
serve to be beaten! day, which thou

And, how righteous hast been supposed
a quarrel against me to have taken no-
hath not onely thy tice of in thy medi-
tation.

Justice but thy very
Grace and Mercy.

Notwithstanding, O Blessed Petition.

Father, give thy poor creature 1. For our
selves.

leave to beseech, and let him
prevail with thee, not to take
that advantage* against him

which justly thou mayest:

Rather, now thou hast born

so long, break my heart by this

thy goodness, and make thy

forbearance and long suffer-

F 3 ing

Part. II. ing to lead me to repentance.
 Chap. 10. Vouchsafe unto me thy sancti-

fyng Spirit: Let it fill me with
 an holy shame of my former
 ways: And let the sence of
 my own unworthyness towards
 thee beget in me an holy in-
 dignation against my self, a
 passionate and constant zeal
 by future diligence, as far as is
 possible to redeem and repair
 some of my lost and most ind-
 ly mis-spent time. Let my
 heart be never void of a sted-
 fast purpose of serving thee in
 the impartial performance of
 every known duty, (especi-
 ally of (***) and careful a-
 voidance of every

* Here put in
 any thing for
 which thou findest
 occasion.

fin. (*) And ha-
 ving thus given to
 will, do thou of the
 same thy good plea-
 sure

sure give also to do, following Part. II.
Chap. 20.
the preventions of thy Grace by the continual assistances thereof, so that I may proceed from one virtue unto another, perfecting holiness in thy feare, and keeping a conscience void of offence towards thee and all men.

And this my cordial purpose, and perseverance in endeavours of pleasing thee, do thou through the blood of my Saviour graciously accept, laying not to my charge any of my former sins, nor visiting upon me, either the neglects, or transgressions of my duty. At least however thou shalt here deal with thy servant, in the last day acquit him of all guilt, and through the merits of thy Son, let him obtain remission

Part. II.
Chap. 10.

mission of his sin, and an inheritance in thine everlasting Kingdome. In the mean while, as to the necessities of this present life, give thy servant what thou pleasest, and what thou seekest best for him, even food convenient. Then needest not O God, my service, but accept my ambition of being serviceable unto thee, and bless me both with strength and opportunities for it, and if it may be thy holy will, with success therein.

2. For
others

Father, I pray unto thee also for all men (forasmuch as thou art a God who wouldest have all to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of thy truth) especially for all and every member and members of thy Universal Church,
and

and for the particular Church
or this the Land of my nati-
vity: For the Kings Majesty, the
Queen and the whole Royal
Family, for all that are in au-
thority, for the several Stew-
ards of thy Mysteries the Mi-
nisters of thy Gospel (for him
in particular to whose over-
sight thou hast committed me)
that thou wilt give unto them
all, according to thy most gra-
cious pleasure, the blessings
both of this life and that
which is to come, especially
such measures of thy Spirit,
that every shoulder may lie
fitted for its burden, and all a-
mongst us may faithfully serve
thee, according to their seve-
ral degrees; so that this whole
Land may be blessed with a-
bundance of prosperity and

Part II
Chap. 10.

peace, so long as the Sun and Moon endureth. Forget not peculiarly to show mercy unto the \dagger relations, \dagger friends, \dagger helpers \dagger and well-wishers of thy servant, Reward, I beseech thee, all their love, and \dagger forgive, good Lord, divert, and put an end unto all others malice or enmity. Let thine eyes be ever open upon, and the bowels of thy compassion be moved towards, all thy wanting and suffering servants: Support them under, and graciously deliver them out of all their distresses, and let the end be peace, and righteousness, and blessedness for ever.

Thanks-
giving.

Thy servant will speak yet once more, and praise thee for thine infinite love and compassion to that miserable nature,

ture, of which he is a partaker, Part. II.
Chap. II.
 in revealing to us, when we had all lost or corrupted it, the knowledge of thy self, both by the light of Nature, and most clearly by thy holy Word; in sending thy Son for our redemption, in appointing the Ministry and Ordinances of thy Gospel, and pouring out thy holy Spirit to turn us from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto the kingdom of thy Son. O God, I particularly bless thee, for the knowledge which I have of thee in my Saviour Christ Jesus; for my share in him; for any measure of thy Grace on me vouchsafed; for the comfortable hope which through thy Sons blood I have of pardon and eternal life; for
 this

Part. II. this days life and protection,
 Chap. 10. for t the with-holding, (or re-
 moving) those several judge-
 ments which my sins

* Here praise deserve, (* * *) for
 God for any par- the loading me with
 ticular deliver- a multitude of most
 ance, saying undeserved blessings
 (especially for (especially for * * *)
 * *)

Encrease upon me
 thy Grace evermore; and
 make me thankful by proving
 a faithful Steward of all thy
 mercies. Let that Eye of
 thine which never slumbreth
 nor sleeperth, which hath been
 open upon me this day, watch
 over me this night: Let no-
 thing disturb or make me a-
 fraid. Let none of the sins of
 the day lye down with me, nor
 ever I appeare against me,
 Vouchsafe my body due re-
 fresh-

freshment, and let my soul Part. II.
 have her songs in the night. Chap. 10
 Keep both from all works of
 darkness: and let me be ever
 with thee, O Father, both here
 and hereafter, through thy
 Son my Saviour Christ Jesus,
 in whose name and words I fur-
 ther pray,

Our Father, &c.

Chap. XI.

*Some further Directions touch-
 ing the use of these Prayers.*

*Objections of want of time, or
 want of privacy considered.*

IN these or the like words may a
 devout Christian, I presume, not
 unfaithfully pour out his heart before
 God, morning and evening. But it
 is to be remembered to what end
 these

Part. II. these form weres prepared, and the
 Chap. 22. use of them directed to, to wit, to
 be a provision aginst raw, heedless,
 imperfect, broken, confused, and dis-
 orderly Prayers: of which dulness,
 distemper, or distraction may make
 even the devoutest Christian to be
 guilty, if he alwayes trust to his ex-
 temporary faculty and readines

Wherefore it is not the intention
 of the present direction, to tye even
 every one that shall use these or the
 like forms ever to them, but onely
 commonly, or as his Christian pru-
 dence and sobriety shall judge it best
 suiting with his devotion and pre-
 sent temper. So then, if at any
 time a Christian shall find his mind
 more ready and present than ordi-
 nary, so that he can say in Holy
 David's words, *My heart is fixed,*
 (or, prepared) *O Lord, my heart is*
fixed, and he feel a certain over-
 flowing of affection ready to come
 over his soul, he is to esteem this a
 time, when God doth as it were
 bespeak somewhat more than ordi-
 nary,

Private Devotion.

III

nary, to that purpose offering, and giving him to feel already, more than ordinary assistance; and by such special moving of the waters secretly signifie, that he hath some healing benefit or refreshment, then to communicate unto the Soul. Wherefore let him yield himself to the leading of the Spirit, and by no means let slip that holy season of a more free and large effusion or pouring out his soul before God: Alwayes in the mean while remembering that he duly prepare himself, by some fore-going meditation, according to what hath been already in part spoken, and will hereafter be more fully considered.

And this practise, I presume, as it so far binds a man up, that his devotion should not be loose and flighty, so it allows him (1.) such liberty as may duly exercise and improve any spiritual gifts which he conceives himself to have, and (2.) such variety as that there is no feare, that custome or treading alwayes the same

Part. II.

Chap. 12.

Part II.
Chap II.

same tract, (I mean repeating the same words) should make him guilty of formality and deadness.

If there be any Objection now lying against this proposed course in our devotion, it is, as far as I can see, one of these two, either (1) that it will take up too much time, or (2) That those who for the general can use it, yet at all times cannot find opportunity for it, as of privacy when abroad, &c.

But as to the first case objected, we have already supposed our practitioner to be such, who lives somewhat above a servile life, and therefore may spare some part of his time, which surely he cannot spend to a better purpose, or upon more beneficial employment. And it will undoubtedly be found true by him, who shall set himself upon this practice, or put his devotions into this mold, that when he is once but got into the way, and settled in it, the performance of all will cost him less time by much in a day, than
bath

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hath the reading of these directions. Part I I.
An hour in a day (or very little Chap. 11
more) being divided into equal
parts, and half taken in the morning,
halfe at night, may very well suffice:
and they are either very full of im-
ployment, or exceeding bad hus-
bands of their time, who, being at
their own command, cannot afford
so much time for so necessary a
work. ¶ Not to speak that some
part of this work may be reckoned
a kind of studying, and that as be-
coming, as useful to all such as we
speak to. ¶ Consider man, which is
of greater concernment, thy soules,
or thy bodies welfare? Which is
longer, threescore years and ten, or
Eternity? Canst thou therefore
only find time to provide for the
more unworthy?

The latter opposition of want of
privacy, when abroad, is more or
less considerable according to the
accommodation and entertainment
we meet with abroad, which some-
times is such that it gives us no less
oppor-

Part II. opportunities of privacy than we
 Chap. II. have at home. Then, as to the utensils of our devotion, A Bible is easily got in the house; a Note-book in my pocket (out of which when I come home I may transcribe into my *Memorial* or *Accompt* any thing which I judge fit) is no great burden: no more is my prayer-book if occasion be. So that in this case my devotions may be compleat.

☉ But suppose I be cast into a chamber amongst company, and those such whom I like not much for overlookers of my devotion. In this case, supposing my company to be persons who will either scorn me and my Religion, or disturb me, it is better my devotions be less compleat, and private than more full and open. Now totally hindered of privacy I cannot be. I can pretend (and that without a lye) little common necessary business which may call me out while I can enquire into my self and pour out a short prayer to God walking or otherwise. And God

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God no doubt will accept my devo-
tions when as perfect as I can, al-
though not as I would.

Part I L.

Chap. 11

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PART

PART III.

Of more solemn Retirement into the Closet upon *Holy-days* and *Sundays*.

Chap I.

That private devotions should be greater on Holy-days, than on ordinary days. The end of Festivals, and their Vindication from abuses and Cavils.

THat upon Holy-days or Festivals, they ought to be more taken

Private Devotion.

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taken up in devotion, than on other daies, there is no men I presume will deny, except they be so factious as to slight the Institution, or so sensual as not to understand the end and designe of them.

Part III.
Chap. I.

It is as uncharitable as unreasonable a Part to conclude, because they beare the name ordinarily of certain Saints and Martyrs, that therefore the daies were superstitiously consecrated to the meer honour of those Saints. The design of the Church in this Institution seems to me only thus much.

First, that Almighty God might have particular glory for all the particular parts and degrees of the work of our redemption (the *Incarnation*, *Circumcision*, *Passion*, *Resurrection* &c. of our Saviour) as likewise for all those his servants by whose doctrine and examples, whether in life or death, his holy Gospel hath been planted and confirmed. Then 2. that there might be due commemoration of such particular persons,
and

Part III and of the graces in which they did
 Chap. 1. excel; as well to the end, that their
 examples (at least) might be an immortal incitement to virtue, and they being dead might yet thus speak; as that virtue might have its deserved honour, which for the enforcement of like worthy practises upon others, comes not at all too late though it be given to the ashes of the vertuous.

And that these two, two wit, Giving particular honour to God, and the propagation of virtue, were the main aims of the Church, seems to be undeniable, if we do consider either the particular Collects on those daies, or that clause in the Prayer for the Estate of Christs Church Militant, towards the end, (*We bless thy name for all thy servants departed this life in thy faith and feare, beseeching thee to give us grace to follow their good examples, &c.*) which prayer we know is one part of the Service of the Church upon every Festival, and both this
 and

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and the forementioned Collects expressly profess as much as we affirm.

Part III.
Chap. I.

Now these as they cannot be rejected by any sober men (and so the end being right, and the power just, and the thing it self as just (which two last, because I see no reason for the questioning them, I let pass without any other proof, than the evidence which they carry with them) it cannot be seen how the institution should be amiss, wherefore the factious have an answer :) so they are directly frustrated by these, who look upon Festivals as merely a time of liberty, and so many days devoted to pleasure or idleness. I will not say, but that both the Church and State, in settling these Institutions by Law, might have some aim at allowing servants, and those who live a servile life, some rest and time for lawful recreations, which sometimes the covetousness of some Masters, sometimes some persons own covetousness

Part III. nefs would not allow them : (And
 Chap. 1. this is justifiable even by the practise
 of God himself in the fourth Com-
 mandment, *that thy servant may
 rest, &c.*) but that it was never
 either the Churches or States inten-
 tion, that they should wholly be
 spent to this purpose I do affirm :
 and for proof hereof, *at home*, alledge
 our Laws, which enjoyn all on such
 days to resort to places of publick
 worship for the service of God, and
abroad, that Imperial Constitution,
We will not that Holy-days, which
are consecrate to the supreme Ma-
jesty be imployed or spent upon plea-
sures. And it would be a right-
 pious work, and as much for the
 vindication of Festivals as any other,
 if Magistrates would, according as I
 am sure they may punish those, who
 use to spend whole Holy-days in
 their pleasures (dancing, hunting,
 runnings, footbals, &c.) by the
 legal mulct for absence from Divine
 Service.

But may no recreation then be
 taken

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taken upon Holy days? I do not say, Part. III.
Chap. I.
nor intend that : nor doth, I presume,
the Law neither new, or ould. But
the rest and (if by the rest we will
understand any thing but a dull
idleness) the refreshment of labour-
ing persons, being one thing which,
by the way, was designed in their
Institution, plain it is that lawfull
recreations, as they are exercises of
refreshment, may on them be used.
But as to such recreations, which
shall supplant or thrust out the ser-
vice of God, which is the main end
to which the Festivals were ordain-
ed, I see not how they can with-
out sin be frequented, practi-
sed, or tollerated : I am sure our
Ecclesiastical Laws tollerate them
not.

Further I presume the sence which
the fourth Commandment in com-
mon equity bears, enforceth as much
as I press: For that enjoyning a Jew to
sanctifie the seventh day, that is the
time which by their Law was set apart
to the worship of God, will also (at
least)

G

Part. III. least) in equity and reason enjoyn a
 Chap. 3. Christian to sanctifie such times, as
 their Laws have consecrated to the
 Divine worship: which Laws touch-
 ing the particular setting apart of
 times to the worship of God, though
 they are not all extant in Scripture,
 nor immediately delivered by the
 mouth of God; yet being made by
 them, whom he, to whom *all power*
both in Heaven and Earth was given,
 hath commissioned and made his
 delegates (to wit, his Apostles, and
 their successors, the governours of the
 Church) cannot be looked upon as
 altogether humane, but have a cer-
 tain stamp of Divinity; according
 as ordinarily we interpret the com-
 mands of the Kings officers, in such
 things wherein they are commissio-
 nated, to be the Kings commands.
 Now, that Holy days were ordain-
 ed by the lawful governours of the
 Church, is too evident to be denied.
 And, I should not feare to say, that
 some of our present Feasts were at
 the least observed by some of the
 Apostles,

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Apostles, our Saviours immediate Part. III.
 Substitutes. How therefore can we Chap. 1.
 neglect to sanctifie such times, which
 are thus consecrated to God, that is
 not imploy them to those separate
 uses; to which they were appointed
 (which is the meaning of sanctifying
 in this regard, in Scripture) without
 the unhallowing *holy* or *devoted*
 things, or without the evident breach
 of this Commandement.

I will add no more to this pur-
 pose; but that every one being
 bound to proportion his time for his
 devotion; according to the oppor-
 tunities and leisure which he hath,
 and it being unlawful by the very
 municipal law, or law of the Land
 (for such is the Ecclesiastical law in
 this case) totally to follow the work
 of my calling on Festivals or Holy-
 days; I cannot but have more lei-
 sure on them for the service of God;
 and therefore consequently a great-
 er portion of it is to be spent in my
 devotions. Which being concluded
 as most lawful and rightfully it

Aff. 20.
16.
Vid. Euseb.
Ecc. Hist.
lib 5 cap.
22, 23, &
de vita
Const. l. 3
may 6. 17.

Part. III. may in general, what hath been
 Chap. 2. said holds as well concerning private
 as publick devotions. I ought therefore to think my self bound on every Holy day to somewhat more of devotion in private, than what every day calls for.

Chap. II.

*What there should be of new in
 our private devotions upon
 Holy days.*

THe question now will be, what that is of new, which Festivals may seem properly to require of a Christian in his Closet-devotions.

To which it must be said, that as to the general substance of my devotions, it can scarce be other at any time, than what hath been already delivered, to wit, *Reading, Meditation and Prayer.* But yet each of these may be employed a while

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while upon some new specialty, or particular matter which that days occasion and solemnity directs unto: to wit, upon the life or virtues of that particular Saint or Martyr, whose memory the day celebrates: or if the day be such which was intended only to praise God for some particular transaction relating to our redemption (as the *Nativity* of our Lord, his *Circumcision* &c.) to bend my devotions hitherward. To this purpose it may be proper, besides what I read in Holy Scripture that day by my constant course, (which should not at any time except upon evident necessity, or very considerable business be broken) to read those particular portions of Scripture which are by the Church appointed for that day; I mean the *Epistle* and *Gospel* for the day. And these being read over with such care as is before prescribed, to spend some time according to the former rules in Meditation upon them: and then, either to my own prayers to

Part. III take in the Collect of the day, or Chap. 3. to add some other petitions and praises, as my Christian discretion shall judge seasonable. To this employment if I allot an hour (or if need so require half an hour) besides what I ordinarily, on other days, spend on my devotions, the work may in some good measure be done. And it cannot be thought but so much time may well be spared by reason of that leisure and rest which the Law on that day enjoyns me.

Chap. III.

An Exemplification or practice of the former rules in Christmas day, with a fit Prayer to be added to my ordinary Prayers upon that day.

NOW because all the directions given will be better understood

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stood, and rendered more easily practicable to the plainest, if a little exemplified, a pattern or two shall be set down of what there should be of new in our devotions on Festivals and those so framed, as that they may serve not only for instances in this last case, but for examples of practice to those formerly given rules, touching *Reading* and *Meditating*. Part. III.
Chap. 3.

And first for such Feasts which celebrate the memory of some particular in, or step to, our redemption.

Amongst these the copy shall be in *Christmas day*. (The Epistle *Hebr.* I. v. 1. to v. 13.) Which having carefully read over, I cannot but observe (according to my first rule in Meditation) that the holy Ghosts design is to express the glory of our Saviour, and especially his eminence above any, and all the Angels (which yet are the most glorious part of the Creation.) And this glory of his is expressed to be so Part. II.
Chap. 5.

G 4 eminent,

Part. III. eminent, not only in respect of his
 Chap. 3. Divine nature, as he is the express
 Image of his Fathers person, but
 also as he is God-man, as having
 been born in our nature, *and purged
 our sins, he sate down on the right hand
 of the Majesty on high.* So that the
 very humane nature of our Saviour,
 how ever contemptible it might
 seem once to be, is now advanced
 infinitely above the *Angels, all the
 Angels being to worship* The incarnate
 Son of God, *And his Throne being
 established for ever.*

Now there being in all this no
 considerable matter of difficulty
 which offers it self, I have no need
 here to apply my second rules (touch-
 ing searching into difficulties) and
 therefore I proceed to the third,
 to consider what I am the better
 for having read this. The substance
 of it I have already gathered in the
 practise of my first rule: that re-
 viewing to gain light to the parti-
 cular parts, I find by the second
 verse my self instructed and confirm-
 ed

edin in that point of my faith, the *Eternity of the second person*; or the *Sons being from everlasting*: For it is said that God by his Son made the *Worlds*, that is (as I may probably conclude) all things that are. His Son then was before the *Worlds*, that is, from Eternity.

Part II.
Chap 3.

Again that admirable expression (*the brightness of the fathers glory, and express image of his person and the upholder of all things by his power*) what a glorious representation is it of the *Sons Deity*, and being distinct but not separate from his eternal father; according as the brightness of glory may be conceived as distinct from that glory, of which it is the brightness, but never can be apart from that glory.

Again that following expression (*after he had by himself purged our sins, Sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high*) with what an heavenly emphasis doth it set out,

1, The fulness of the atonement made

Part. III. made by Christ as to every faithful
 Chap. 3. person: by himself he purged our
 sins: and how can they not be pure
 before the Father, whose sins his on-
 ly Son by himself hath purged?

1. The transcendency of our Sa-
 viours glorification (*He sat down
 at the right hand of the Majesty
 on high*) What a blessed (*∞* or)
height is here to express it! and how
 doth the very expression affect the
 considering mind! *he sat down at the
 right*, &c: me thinks I could say it
 an hundred times over with new
 admiration and dissolution of soul.
 It secretly insinuates also, what shall
 be our future glory, when we shall
 be like unto him, and *sit down with
 him at the right hand of the same Ma-
 jesty*. More of the same nature might
 be noted, but this is sufficient to ex-
 emplifie the Rules.

I proceed now to consider the
 Gospel which also I am supposed to
 have read. (Gospel, *John* 1. ver. 1.
 to 15.) The scope and substance of
 this Gospel seems to be this, that
 our

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our Lord Jesus being God ever Part II.
with the Father, in time took upon Chap 3.
him our nature to redeem us, and
that *John the Baptist* was a witness
hereof.

But here are severall expressions,
which seem to contain some matter
of faith touching our Saviour, and
yet I do not perfectly understand
them. Wherefore if I have any
help (as before directed to, by the
second Rule touching Meditation
upon Scripture) I consult that touch-
ing this whole portion of Scrip-
ture. Which having consulted I
may be supposed in some tolerable
measure to understand what is held
forth therein necessary to be belie-
ved. If I have no such book or help
then I must make as good shift as I
can: and considering the scope and
drift of the place before mentioned,
and every particular expression
at which I stick, I interpret that
which I doubt of, with a regard to,
and by the light I can take from,
what I understand. Thus having
the

Part. III. the generall scope of this Scripture
 Chap. 3. in my mind, I review it, or consider

it again in the order as it lies. Nothing do I meet with which I do not in a good measure understand till I come to ver. 4 & 5. (For having observed at the first reading, that (ver. 14.) the Apostle saith the *Word was made flesh*, by the *Word* in the 1. verse I can understand nothing but the eternal Son of God) *In him was life, and the life was the light of men.* What life? or how is the life the light of men? I consider that the holy Ghost is here speaking of the Deity of the Son, and in the third verse ascribes the making of all things to him. Then it follows *In him was life.* It is very likely that the meaning hereof is thus much. *He is the fountain of life,* he made as well the things which live, as those which do not. He communicated life to all living. *And the life was the light of men,* It is very likely, that life is here to be understood of that naturall life, which all
 men

men whatsoever live: for he speaks of Christ as the Creator of all living. Now, whereas it is said, that this *life is the light of men*, or that that life, which men do partake of from God, is light; haply the meaning hereof may be, that the life which the Creator gave to man, was a more lightsome (that is, a more intelligent) life than what the rest of living creatures here below partake of; to wit, a Rational life. Now it follows, *The light shined in darkeness, and the darkeness comprehendeth it not.* It is very likely that by *light* I must understand in this verse, what I did thereby in the former, to wit, Reason, and so considering all more attently, at length I guess, that some such thing as this is the import of that verse.

The natural light of mans reason shone in his corrupt and sensual nature, but that nature followed not the dictates of it: Men rejected what their reason would have guided them to choose. And this, being that

Part. III.
Chap. 3.

Part III. that I was lead thereto by consider-
 Chap 3. ing the drift of the words, and find
 now that the words will, to my best
 judgement, very well bear, I conceive
 may probably be the meaning of
 this place.

But here it may be very necessary to
 admonish especially ordinary people,
 that they proceed not too far upon
 their own judgements in interpreting
 darker places of Scripture, of which
 this haply may seem one. We have
 only in what we have said shewn
 the best way, which can be taken for
 the finding out the sence of Scripture.
 But if so be, that using this method I
 particularly could not have found
 out so much touching the sence of
 this Scripture, as hath been above de-
 clared, yet had not either my read-
 ing or my meditation been fruitless.
 I could very well and very profitably
 have rested in this, that I observed
 these verses to testify to me, that
 Christ is God, and by him all things
 were made; and that from him came
 life, and all the light, which in life
 men

men have. And thus much, by Part. III.
Chap. 3.
observation, a plain person might have found from hence. But usually, I say, plain persons will do best, not to trust the strength of their own reason, which commonly is none of the best judge of consequences and dependances, but rather get to themselves such helps as above directed to, and follow their wholesome guidance.

Well; having found out as I conceive thus much of the meaning of this Scripture, if there be any thing else I doubt of in that part of it which remains I proceed to consider it, carrying still in my mind the scope of the whole, and thus much as I have learnt of the sense of the former part. The substance of the remaining part seems to me thus much, That when it pleased the *Word to be made flesh* (that is, the Son of God to take upon him our nature; and in that nature to dwell) *John the Baptist* was sent for a witness to testify, that this was the *true light*

Part III. *light*, to the end that ~~men~~ might
 Chap 3. believe: And to as many of man-
 kind as did believe upon, and re-
 ceive this light, this light (himself
 being the eternal and natural Son
 of God) gave the priviledge, right or
 power to become through him the
 Sons of God, being now born unto a
 new (*viz.* a godly life by their re-
 ceiving him. Now here it may be (as
 I look through the particular verses)
 are one or two things more of mo-
 ment which I doubt of, and touching
 which I will consult the best helps
 I have, or, otherwise consider with
 as much attention and modesty as I
 can.

First, in what sence should Christ
 be termed the *true light*?

-This considering of, I remember
 that before; there was mention of
 a certain *light* which all men did par-
 take from the *Word* as created by
 him (to wit, their Reason) and this
 light, though it shone in them, yet,
 as the first man did not follow its
 shine, so the rest did reject its gui-
 dance

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dance, and the *darkeness received*, or Part III.
comprehended it not. But now it is Chap. 3.
 said, *that the Word*, that is, *Christ*
made flesh, is the *true light*: both
 which considering together, the im-
 port of all seems to be this, That
 whereas the natural light of reason,
 being not comprehended but rather
 overcome(by the darkeness of mans
 corrupt nature, was insufficient, of
 it self, to lead man unto his salvation
 or true happiness, and, being so-
 phisticated by the same corruption,
 had led him to seek happiness in
 many false and by paths, Jesus Christ
 came into the world to bring to
 light the true way to happiness, and
 so was the *true light*.

From whence also I begin to see
 somewhat into the second passage
 which I doubted of, to wit, what
 should be the meaning of that [*as*
many as received him] For, consider-
 ing how the Evangelist in the ver-
 ses immediately foregoing speaks of
 Christ, to wit, as the *true light*, I
 easily see, that to receive him is to
 imbrace

Part III imbrace him as the light, and so to
 Chap. 3. apply my self to those holy wayes
 which he hath discovered, alone
 to lead unto happinese. Which also
 the following words further intimate
 [*them that beleive in his name*] that is
 them who by their imbracing the
 discovery which he hath made, and
 doing accordingly, do manifest that
 they are perswaded he is the true
 light: which thing they do, not as
 they are born by *the will of man*, of
 flesh and blood (for the *darkeness*
comprehendeth not the light) but as
 begotten, or created over again by
 God hereto.

So then, now I conceive I under-
 stand the *Gospel for this day*, and all
 the most concerning particulars in
 it. The substance of it therefore I
 recollect after this my search, to the
 end it may sink the deeper into me,
 and I be the better versed hereafter in
 this Scripture. And that is this, That
 Christ being eternally God, was also
 together with God (with whom he
 ever was) the Creator of all things,
 and

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and particularly of man; that man Part III.
in his recreation received a certain Chap. 3.
light (*viz.* his reason) which he op-
posed and overcame, rather than
followed; that therefore it pleased
Christ to be made man, and coming
into the world, to discover the true
way to happiness unto degenerate
man; and as many of mankind, who
embraced this discovery, and mani-
fested their belief of Christs being
the *true light*, by their receiving him
as such, he restored into the blessed
state of being the Sons of God (as
Adam was before his fall.) And Luke 3
of all this *John the Baptist* was sent 38.
before to be a witness, that by his te-
stimony men might be prepared to
beleive in this *true light*.

Thus much then I am improved
in point of knowledge. But is there
nothing which may be further use-
ful to me as to practicals? No pro-
mise of mercy? No threat of pu-
nishment to any? Nothing to
quicken me to my duty? There is
surely.

First,

Part III. First, that is a remarkable expres-
 Chap. 3. sion, *As many as received him, to them he gave power to become the Sons of God.* I cannot expect ever to be by my incarnate Lord, made a Son of God, and Heir with him in the Kingdome of his Father, except I receive him as the *true light*, except I look for happiness by the method by him delivered, a holy Christian practice, according to his Gospel. I see therefore hence the necessity of being conformable to all the Commands of the Gospel. He is salvation to none to whom he is not light, If therefore I am not faithful, meek, charitable, holy, &c. as the Gospel directs, salvation it self will not save me.

Further, both the Epistle and Gospel put me in mind of, what the day celebrates, the Incarnation of our Saviour (at least his visible Incarnation, for to the eye he was not Incarnate till born.) *The Word was made flesh, and so himself spake unto us, and by himself he purged*

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purged our sins: The Word, who Part III.
Chap. I
was that? The Son of God, the
brightness of his Fathers glory, the
express Image of his person, he who
was ever with God and ever God,
beir of all things, by whom all things
were made, he was made flesh. O
the depth of the Love of God and
Christ! Whose soul can well hold
to contemplate it!

Besides this admiration, and dis-
solution of soul, the thoughts hereof
cannot but be thus further useful to
me.

First, seeing from what an infi-
nite Glory, to what a mean nature
and condition, the Son of God
(himself the infinite God) stooped
for the help and saving of men, I
cannot but see my self in duty
bound to the like humility, meek-
ness and condescension; not to stand
upon mine own petty interests, and
consult nothing but self, when I have
opportunity to do good to any in-
feriour that wants my succour. Had
Christ done so, he had never been
made

Part III. made flesh for me. Now let the same
 Chap. 3. *mind be in me, which was also in*
 Phil. 2. 5. *Christ Jesus.*

And again, seeing to what an height of excellency the nature of mankind is now advanced, it should prevail with me to put a due price upon it, and never willingly to dishonour, by any unworthy action, what God himself hath so honored. Did God stoop to vindicate my nature from the contempt and tyranny of the devil, and shall I, notwithstanding all the condescensions of his grace, still wilfully enslave and destroy my self.

Further, God having united the nature, of which I am a partner, to him, I should be ambitious of all means of uniting my self to him, that is, of doing all that may be on my part to further this union.

And especially, the thoughts hereof should quicken me this day to a zealous participating his body and blood. Can I consider God made flesh for me, God debasing himself

himself to be one with me, and is it possible that I can neglect, what is so much for my honour and interest, as the means of sealing my particular union with him? How can I esteem my self duly to have celebrated the memory of his being made flesh, if having means of partaking of that flesh which he took, I neglect it? And how much of ingratitude must such neglect have in it.

Lastly, seeing that one great end of our Saviours being incarnate was, to be the true light to man in the pursuit of his happiness, let me account it a noble degree of assimilation or being like my Saviour, if I can in any measure be a light to any herein. And if God have by office made me such, let me prize and honor my imployment, and manifest my value of it by my diligence in it. *The more light I give, the nearer do I in my office come unto my Saviour.*

Thus much then of incitement have I hence to my duty. My other rules

Part III. rules are not here so applicable:

Chap. 3. Wherefore in the conclusion of my
 Meditations I consider what of new
 all that I have meditated, doth sug-
 gest unto this daies prayers: And
 that I shall find } Praise.
 to be matter of } Petition.

As to the first,

1. The infinite goodness of God,
 that he would at all think of resto-
 ring that nature, which was now an
 enemy to him, having wilfully fallen
 from him, cannot, if duly considered,
 but melt my heart into thankful
 praise of him.

2. That (yet) greater commen-
 dation of his goodness, his infi-
 nite condescension, his redeeming
 our nature in a way so glorious to
 it, as was the assumption of it unto
 his own nature, methinks should
 overcome my soul, and wrap it in-
 to an extasie of praise and admirati-
 on. In all likelihood, infinite wis-
 dome might have thought of a
 course, which would have been less
 honourable to man, and would not
 so

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so much (if I may so speak) have Part III.
humbled the Deity. But *he would* Chap. 4.
not bring us to glory ingloriously.

The meer consideration therefore of
the honour which our Lords Incar-
nation puts upon our ill deserving
nature, will not suffer me to be si-
lent this day in his praises.

And as to matter of Petition,
surely it cannot but be right season-
able to beseech, 1. That all this
may not be in vain unto me: And
2. That to that end, I may trans-
scribe these Copies of goodness, hu-
mility, and purity, which shone in
our Saviour's Incarnation, and walk
in the *light*, as well of his *example*,
as *doctrine*. And all this I may do
in some such words as these.

*A prayer to be added to my
other daily Prayers on
Christmas-day.*

O God the Father of our
Lord Jesus Christ; who,
H out

Part. III. out of thy meer goodnesse and
 Chap. 4. pittie, having promised thy Son
 to redeem faine mankind, didst
 in the fulness of time faithfully
 perform with thine hand
 what thou hadst spoken with
 thy mouth, and send him into
 the world made, and about
 this time born of a woman:
 I, one of that redeemed,
 though vile nature, humbly
 adore this thy Grace and faith-
 fulness. Eternity, Lord, is too
 little to bless thee for it: But
 Eternal praise is the greatest
 that I can wish thee: and maist
 thou to Eternity receive due
 glory for this thine infinite
 Goodnesse and mercy!

O thou the only begot-
 ten Son, *by whom* thine eternal
 Father *made the Worlds*, who
 wast ever with God, and ever
 God

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God, the *brightness of his* Part. III.
Glory and express Image of Chap. 4.
his Person, yet wth pleased in
time to be made fl^{sh}, and
pitch thy Tabernacle in our
nature: I, part of the purchase
of thy bloud, poor dust and
ashes, but such a thine infinite
Glory was pleased for my sake
once to wear, and now to glo-
rify, and set above Angels,
most humbly blesse thee, as
well for this thy condescension,
as for the honor done to man.
Thou tookest not upon thee the
nature of Angels, but the seed
of Abraham thou didst take.
Even so, O Saviour, for so it
hath seemed good to thee.
Thou thoughtest not the An-
gelical nature low enough for
thine Infinity to stoop to. Most
dear Jesus! thou hast over-
H 2 come

Part. II. come me. I would praise thee;
 Chap. 10. but I cannot further. ———

Accept my silent ravishment,
 admiration, and faith. *I beleive*
Lord, help my unbelief.

O holy Spirit the power of
 the most High; who after an
 unconceivable sort, over-
 shadowing the Virgin Mother,
 didst frame in her sacred
 Womb that Holy

* *That is,* was Thing which * was
 the Son of God. called the Son of
For in Scripture God; for this thy
many times be- most wonderful and
ing called & (be- fearful (but to man
ing, (word and most happy) opera-
thing,) are one tion; I unworthy man
and the same. blest thee: beseech-

ing thee to inspire my heart,
 that I may from this blessed
 Copy transcribe these Virtues
 of Goodness, Humility, Love,
 Purity.

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Part III.
Chap. 4.

Purity, and whatsoever Of mine
holy Saviour, either by his *Life*
or *Doctrine* hath taught me:
that so I walking in his *light*;
he may be to me *life* everlast-
ing, to the praise of thee, O
Father, Son and holy Spirit,
one undivided God, Eternally.
Amen.

Chap. IV.

*An Exemplification of the for-
mer rules in St. Ste-
phen's day: With a Pray-
er which may be used on
any Saints day.*

FOR the Epistle, *Acts 7, v 55.*
to the end. Which, having
read, I find to be a narrative or re-
lation of St. *Stephen's* Martyrdom.
And the chief substantials that my
H 3 thoughts

Part. III thoughts fix upon, are, that Encour-
 Chap. 4. raging vision vouchsafed to him, in
 his entrance upon his suffering, and
 the manner of his taking his suffer-
 ing.

St. *Stephen*, the first of those, who
 were to pass to Heaven in the fiery
 Chariot of a violent death, for the
 witness of Jesus, was now as good
 as sentenced: for the defence, which
 he had made, had only further in-
 censed his persecutors. But he, who
 should make the first triall of so bold
 a passage had need of some more
 than ordinary encouragement: It
 pleased therefore him, whose Wit-
 ness he was, to command away the
 Clouds, and through the opened
 Heavens to show himself standing at
 the right hand of God, ready to re-
 ceive him thither. And seeing the
 passage now so clear. and the end so
 glorious, it was not likely that good
Stephen should stumble at a stone or
 two. *This method doth the gracious
 providence of God observe, that where
 he gives a bitterer cup, there he secret-
 ly*

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ly provides greater encouragements, Part. III.
and thereby raiseth the strength of Cha p. 4.
his suffering servants.

Answerable to his encouragement do I find St. Stephen's carriage. For being cast out of the City, and stoned, all is so far from daunting him, that it scarce seems to have disturbed him; for he readily prays to his Saviour both in his own and his murderers behalf. Particularly, these Virtues I cannot but observe lively shining in him suffering.

1. Constancy, Resolution and Christian Magnanimity in those sufferings which a truly Christian cause ingaged him in. 2. Notwithstanding all his extraordinary assurances of Glory (Christ witnessing it to him from Heaven in that blessed Vision); perseverance in earnest prayer to the last. When the stones now struk him, he called upon God and said, &c. 3. Quietness, patience and serenity: The injustice of his sufferings exasperates

Part. III not his Spirit, nor puts him into any
 Chap. 4. passion or indisposition for his duty.

4. Meekness, Charity, Forgiveness, even towards them, who in that they were enemies to him, were enemies also to Christ. He *kneeled down* [An expression of the solemnity of his Prayers] *and cryed with a loud voice* [an expression of the earnestness and fervour of them.] A pattern most worthy imitation in suffering.

Part. II
 Chap. 5.

A double benefit then the substance of this portion of Scripture (recollected according to direction) yields to me. The first, an Antidote or Remedy against dejection under, and slavish fear of suffering. If God at any time call me to the bearing a greater weight of afflictions than ordinary, let not me basely or sinfully decline them, but rather remember what St. *Stephen* (and indeed all the Children of God have) found by experience, that strength shall be given in proportionably, and that suitable to my misery

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sery shall comfort and refresh- Part III
ment come in to sustain my spirit, if Chap 4
I nobly engage. Secondly, St Ste-
phen's example is to me a copy how I
ought to suffer. Hence should I
transcribe, Constancy, Dutifulness,
Patience, Charity, and whatever
other virtues I can observe him to
have exercised in his sufferings

Now as to particular expressions
here, that which concludes the rela-
tion cannot well pass without notice.
*And when he had said this, he fell
asleep:* In sweetness and love he
breathed out his soul; and he do-
ing so, pittie it was, but that to so
sweet a soul, death it self should be
sweetned, and so it was: *He fell
asleep.* It teacheth me how I am to
look on death. To all men death
is but a sleep: good or bad, they
must awake from it. But a good
mans death should be look'd upon
onely as a falling asleep, or as ano-
ther Scripture saith, *Resting from his
labours:* Death is much the easi-
est to good men.

Of

Part. III.

Chap. 4.

Of these notes or remarks which I have thus in my Meditations on this Reading made, those which I have mind chiefly to fasten upon my self (though I would not forget any) are these, which follow, of which therefore I register in my *Memorial* some hints, perhaps so as follows.

“ St. Stephen's day, 1664.

“ *Acts* 7.

“ *Verse* 54, 55. God ever portions his Servants comforts to their sufferings.

Verse 60. He fell asleep. How sweetly do good men dye! Also, a fit Petition to use when I pray for enemies; *Lord lay not this sin to their charge.*

“ I noted all along in St. Stephen these Christian Graces. 1. Constancy and Courage. 2. Perseverance in Prayer, notwithstanding the immediate revelation of his instant Glory. 3. Patience. 4. Charity and Forgiveness.

This pattern Will serve for direction.

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*tion in what we ordinarily intend; Part III.
and it is brief, because it is supposed Chap. 4.
a pattern to be followed in what we
in daily course observe or set down.
But if on Holy days any have a
mind to be larger in their setting
down their Meditations, this hinders
not.*

The Gospel, *Matt. 23. v. 34.*
to the end.

Observing the scope of this
Scripture, I find it to be a Prophecy
of the dismal calamity which should
befal the *Jews*, by reason of their
wilful rejecting the Gospel; and
cutting off them who were sent to
preach it, according as their stub-
born forefathers had cut off the
Prophets. A judgement should be-
fall them, which should be in some
measure a proportionable revenge
of all the righteous blood which
had been shed, from *Abel to Zacha-* ver. 33.
ry: and this by reason that they did
persist in shedding such righteous
blood; as they indeed did in the
case of our Saviour, and his perse-
cuted

Part. III
Chap. 4.

cuted followers. Their City therefore should become a desolation, and the very worship of God being laid waste, they should expect the Messiah so long, that they should even bless him that could tell them any thing of him.

This is the general substance of this Scripture. Difficulty in it I find none to stop me: I proceed therefore to enquire what of advantage I can make by the reading of it, according to my proposed course: And, 1. I find my self, by the observing the two first verses of it, much satisfied touching one case, in which I have many times thought God to deal very hardly, to wit touching his visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children. *Verse 35.* It is said, that upon that generation should fall *all the righteous blood spilt from Abel to Zachary*; which, at the first look seems very severe. But the reason is rendred *ver 34*, because of the Prophets, wise men and scribes which Christ sent amongst them.

them; some they would kill and cruci-
 fie, some scourge in their Synagogues,
 others persecute from City to City,
 according as their forefathers ever
 had served the Prophets: Which
 gives me ground to conclude: *That*
children seldome or never inherit their
fathers punishments or the wrath due
to their fathers sins, but where they
first prove inheritors of those sins:
 And in this case, because they have
 seen their fathers sins, and the pu-
 nishments which have befallen them
 for them, and yet not mended by
 their examples, it is but justice, that
 their fathers sin should be visited
 upon them, that they should have
 the same or like punishments as their
 fathers had, and greater.

Then, 2. I cannot but note how
 slowly and unwillingly God comes
 to judgement. Thus much those
 words, *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem,*
 suggest to me. Our Saviour, I see,
 cannot fortell this desertion and re-
 jection of the *Jews* without a lamen-
 tation taken up, *O Jerusalem, Jeru-*
salem,

Part III. *salem.* So unwilling is he to punish
 Chap 4. that he even weeps at the very
 thoughts of it. [This is a very af-
 fecting consideration, and of spe-
 cial force to quicken me to repen-
 tance, and is therefore to be noted to
 that purpose.]

Lastly, examining further accord-
 ing to the rules proposed, whether
 there be no instance of Gods judge-
 ments against sinners, no threat to
 deter me from any sin, or the like,
 I find there is, and cannot but stay
 my thoughts a while upon this hea-
 vy denunciation of woe against
 those who were outwardly Gods
 own people, for their rejecting the
 offers of Grace, and upon foolish
 prejudices not acknowledging, or
 not being willing to see the light,
 which yet they could not but see,

And if God spared not the natural
 Rom. 11, *branches, how much less will he spare*
 21, *me, who am only grafted in, out of the*
wild olive, if I be guilty of the same
sin? it concerns me therefore in
this case to look into my self: the
 very

very reading of this Scripture ought to be to me a warning. And let me see: Am not I guilty of the like *resisting light* and *rejecting grace*? What do I else when I sin presumptuously, and only not *wilfully*? Do not I then shut mine eyes against the light, and offer violence to the convictions, which come from those Scriptures, whose Authors, the *Jews*, were rejected, for offering violence unto? They rejected their living testimony, I not only that (for that I have recorded in the Scripture) but the very voice of their blood, by which they sealed the truth of their testimony. Oh sinful and ungracious wretch!

Now if any such as this be my case; let my meditations here rest a while. Let me consider whether in this Scripture, which hath thus convinced me of my sin, there be not somewhat which may reclaim me. And truly there is. 1 (That which hath already been mentioned) Gods unwillingness to punish, his patience

Part. III.

Chap. 4.

Part III.

Chap 4.

patience and forbearance. And hath not this been great towards me? How often hath the warm offers of love and pardon invited me, as they did them! May not I say, God would have many a time *gathered me under his wings*? And do not these very warnings, that if I am not reclaimed, I must be forsaken, speak Gods present unwillingness (if any thing will work) to forsake me? Is not this as much as an *O : Jerusalem, Jerusalem*? Again, 2. I here see, that though God bore long with his people, he would not bear alwayes, being that they did persist in resistance of his Grace. And truly I know not how soon God may call home from me his opposed Spirit, and, suffering his Grace no longer to be abused, leave me as he did the *Jews*, in my own stubbornness and wilfulness to perish.

After this sort may I imploy a while my thoughts; and if time will suffer, thus ought I so long to meditate,

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tate, till my moved heart have taken Part III.
 up full resolutions of following the Chap. 4.
 guidance of Gods Spirit, and yield-
 ing to his Grace. And these warn-
 ings or convictions from the Word,
 together with my resolutions upon
 them, should I (if able, register in
 that other of my paper Books, which
 I call my *Accomptal*, or if not) take
 such solemn notice of, that I forget
 not. But if any necessary matter
 force me to depart my privacy, be-
 fore my meditations arrive at such a
 ripeness, yet let me not fail to take
 notice of the warning which I re-
 ceived (and set it down in my *Ac-*
comptal) that so upon my * fasting See Part
 day, when I review the actions of 4. Ch. 4.
 that week, I may be sure not to for-
 get it, but to humble my self for my
 former miscarriages, and consider
 for the future, - how I may turn my
 feet into new wayes.

But to return to the devotions of
 this present day: So much only
 remains now to compleat my pre-
 sent meditations as to consider,
 what

Part III. what of new from all will be seasonable to be added to my accustomed Prayers. And here will be ;

First, Matter of confession touching my resisting Grace, and not walking according to the light which I have had,

Secondly, Matter of praise.

1. For these warnings, which are so many calls to repentance, and invitations to happiness.

2. For the testimony which the Gospel received, & doth to this day receive, by the doctrine and death of *S. Stephen*, and for the constancy, faithfulness, patience, charity and meekness which shone forth in him.

Thirdly, Matter of Petition.

1. For grace, that I may from hence forth yield unto all motions of Gods holy Spirit. 2 That when ever God shal call me to suffer (as he doth frequently by the crosses, oppositions, frustrations, &c. which I meet with in the course of my life) I may manifest the like meekness, patience, charity,

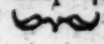
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charity, holy resolution and mind. Part. III.
fulness of God by prayer and all o. Chap. 4.
ther seasonable duties. All which,
having considered how I may in
some sober and orderly way ex-
press or represent before God, let
me either insert in my wonted pray-
ers, or in some short prayer to be
added to them comprise as well as I
can. A pattern whereof very par-
ticular it will not be so expedient to
set down here, but rather so to
frame a Prayer with some respect to
the foregoing heads, as that it may
in general be accommodated to, or
used upon the Feasts of any Saints
or Martyrs.

A short Prayer which may be added to our ordinary prayers upon the feast of any Saint or Martyr by our Church appointed to be kept.

O Lord, the God of truth and holiness, who at sundry times, and in sundry ways hast revealed thy self unto the world, by thy holy Prophets of old, and in these last days by thy Son, of whom thou hast since in all ages raised up thy Saints and Servants to be witnesses, I humbly bless thee as for all the revelations of thy will, and confirmations of thy truth; so especially for the testimony given thereunto by the
life

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life ((a) doctrine) (and Part III.
Chap. 4.
(b) death) of thy servant 
St. S. whom thou madest

unto the world not

only a witness of thy
truth but a pattern

of holiness: and I

beseech thee to par-

don both all my op-

posing, and all my

holding in unrighte-

ousness those truths,

which either he or

any other of thy ser-

vants have preached,

or left

on record. I acknowledge and

bewaile my guiltiness here-

in: Keep me, blessed Father,

for the future (at least) from

all such presumptuous sins;

and grant that the same Spi-

rit resting upon me, which

dwelt upon them, may beget

in

(a) *The word Do-
ctrine is chiefly
to be used upon
the feasts of the
blessed Apostles.*

(b) *If the feast
be not the memo-
riall of a Mar-
tyr, the word
death is to be left
out.*

Part II. in me the like humility, cha-
 Chap: 4. rity (* *) diligence, resolu-
 tion and perseverance in all
 holiness. Let me as

* Here insert the
 mention of any
 Christian virtue,
 in which thou hast
 observed the Saint
 whose memory
 thou celebratest to
 excel.

they both in life and
 death glorifie thee,
 according to my
 measure, so that a-
 mongst those hea-
 venly Hosts and blef-
 sed Society of thy

Servants, I may have some
 (though it should be the low-
 est) place, eternally to praise
 and enjoy thee O Father, Son,
 and Holy Ghost, one most glori-
 ous God. Amen.

Chap. V.

*Of what remains to compleat my
private Festival devotions,
to wit, Almes-giving.*

SOME time, besides what my ordinary course requires, being thus spent in Reading, Meditation, and Prayer, suitable to the particular regard of the day, it only remains to compleat my devotions, that according as God hath blessed me I set apart somewhat for the poor; for it is not certainly my self, or my rich neighbours onely, which I am to feast upon Holy days: and however, it may be, I cannot give in my closet, yet I may in my closet, and at the end of my devotions most conveniently, cheerfully and religiously (and it may be most liberally) consecrate, what I can spare, to such pious use, by separating

Part. III. ting it from the rest, which I reserve
Chap. 4. for ordinary uses. And somewhat

every Holy day would I cast to have thus to consecrate to God, though it were the less: By the observing this course I shall commonly, if not alwayes, have wherewithal to relieve the wants of such, whom I meet with and find to be truly indigent; which, if I doe not use my self to some such method, I may haply manytimes want a stock for. Whether to distribute it in money, or in that which is bought with my money, and may be more suitable to the wants of those whom I relieve, a little Christian discretion will easily direct and the more to enforce this practise, let me consider how naked, miserable and stingey solemn Thanksgiving is, without somewhat of Almes-giving. Then surely I rejoyce in a way most becoming the mercies I and mankind have received, when as many as I have wherewithal conveniently to help, have cause to rejoyce for my rejoycing:

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rejoycing: and on the contrary, if ^{Part III.}
being able (by doing but what is my ^{Chap. 3.}
duty, at least what I well may) to
revive poor and disconsolate per-
sons, I suffer them (through my
close-handedness) to groan under
their distresses upon daies of pub-
lick joy, what a blemish is it to those
daies joy, and what want of Chri-
stian goodness and charity doth it
bespeak in me? I should rather be
greedy and ambitious to make all
the world rejoyce with me.

Now, for the making at least thus
much of Almes giving an act of my
private devotion, no one will, I pre-
sume, be dissatisfied, who either
considers the premises and the na-
ture of the thing, or what our Sa-
viour saith touching this matter, *Let
not thy right hand know what in this
case thy left hand doth.* Let there-^{Mat. 6. 3.}
fore, I say, my charity crown my
devotions: and as I put out that
(whatsoever it is) which I have to
devote unto God, for the relief of
his wanting servants, it will not be
I amiss

Part. III. amiss to use some short ejaculation
 Chap. 5. directed unto his all seeing Majesty,
 by which I may express my chearful
 offering it unto him, that is my
 setting it apart for the poor, whom
 he hath commanded me to succour,
 and promised me a *blessing* if I con-
 sider. Now that may be done in some
 Ps. 41. 1. such words as these.

O Lord, whose is the earth
 and the fulness thereof, I
 offer unto thee (what, by thy
 gift and blessing, I have) this
 smal testimony of my thank-
 fulness and duty, to be be-
 stowed upon those wanting
 ones whom thy providence
 shall give me opportunity to
 relieve. Be thou pleased
 through the blood of my Sa-
 viour to accept it, and pardon
 all my vain expences. *Amen.*
Amen.

The using some such course as
 this

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this proposed will make me more ^{Part III.} liberal in these my acts of charity: ^{Chap. 5.}
for how can I offer niggardly to this
my bountiful God, when I am con-
scious to my self, I have somewhat
considerable, (if I will well husband
all, which I may devote to him, and
yet not abridge my self or mine, ei-
ther of necessities or conveniences:
and hereto I shall be the more quick-
ened, if I remember I offer to God,
who both gave me, and sees all I
have. Now *whether I may* upon such
a day meet with opportunity to my
mind, or such person to bestow it
on, as the discretion of my charity
could wish, or whether I cannot; yet
let me account it really given to
God, and therefore separate it from
the rest of the store, so that ever
after I may look upon it as devoted,
and not to be touched, except to di-
stribute it to the poor; for I have re-
ally, by the prayer above-made, de-
voted and consecrated it to God. But
if any fatal necessity should con-
strain the meddling with any part of
1 2 ought

Part. II ought thus separated, let me religiously observe to return it again to the poor mans purse or stock, with an expiatory usury; that is, with somewhat more, which may make recompence for my first diminishing it. And thus we will leave the private devotions of Festivals, and consider in the next place, what will be meet to be performed on the Lords day.

Chap VI.

That the Lords day ought to be kept holy, and what that means.

Touching the observation of the Lords day, though I judge them indiscreet friends unto it, who refer the institution of it mainly to the fourth Commandement, yet I put the keeping of it holy so far out of all question, that I cannot but account him very unchristian, who either is slighty herein himself, or goes

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goes about to possess others that they may be so without sin. Part III
Chap. 6.

(1.) The natural justice of the thing, that there should be some time set apart amongst the Christian community for the publick and solemn worship of God; (2) The antiquity and authority of that Apostolick canon (recorded partly in express terms in Scripture, and (if it were not) sufficiently manifest by their practice) which hath set apart this time (3.) Our Saviours honouring this day with his resurrection thereupon, which gave occasion to its being set apart, (4.) The custom of all Christian Churches through all ages, and from the very Apostles days. (5.) Nay the practice of our Lord himself on this day, meeting his assembled Disciples, are all of them arguments beyond contradiction, and *warrant* (sufficiently) *divine*, that it is to be esteemed consecrate or set apart to the worship of God. And then the force which the fourth Commandement in equity bears,

Part. III that what time is set apart or con-
 Chap. 6 secrated to God should be sanctified

that is spent to those separate purposes and intents, for which it was set apart (which I say is the meaning of sanctifying or keeping holy any time) sufficiently and beyond all evasion enjoyns its being kept holy, it being supposed once to be set apart as it is before proved to have been. And certainly (if as is undeniable, it be the duty of every

Heb. 4. Christian, as much as may be to
 10. keep all his life as a perpetual Sabbatism or holy rest unto God) it must needs be an argument of a very profane, worldly, and unchristian spirit, not to afford God this day free from sensuall pleasures, and worldly cares or labours. Wherefore, I say, the keeping holy of the Lords day, I put out of all question, and would have no man flatter himself, that he is a devout Christian, who useth either, by idleness or pleasures, or unnecessary worldly business, to prophane what (the Church,

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Church, and being that the Church Part III.
hath done it by good warrant and Chap. 6.
power transmitted to her by Christ)
God himself hath allowed. *Profanation*

I call it: for if the spending it to holy purposes be to sanctifie it, than the spending it contrarily upon ordinary or unworthy practises, is to prophane it. And if we may not give that which is holy unto dogs, Mat. 7.6. it is then surely most intollerable to take that time, which by divine Law ought to be holy unto God, and give it to his enemies, the devil, this world, and our own lusts, which we do when we spend the Lords day either in idleness, pleasures, or needless wordly matters.

Works of *Charity* or *Mercy* are acts of *Holiness*; and works of *necessity*, so far forth as they are works of necessity, are acts of *mercy*, and consequently the doing of either of these (that is works of *Charity* or *Necessity*) when due occasion calls me thereto, is rather sanctifying than unhallowing the Lords day

Part. III. (especially if I do them out of duty
 Chap. 7. towards God, and in his feare) and
 for this I have his warrant, who tells
 Matt. 6. me that he better accepts *Mercy than*
Sacrifice.

Chap. VII.

*Of Preparation for the Lords
 day. A preparatory Prayer
 thereto.*

SEing then that the Lords day
 is to be kept holy, that is, to be
 spent in the worship and service of
 God, for which it is set apart, it con-
 cerns me to consider how I may
 spend it in a way most complying
 with this its design or intendment.
 And I shall easily, upon the very
 consideration of the nature of Gods
 worship, be convinced, that it is in
 a manner impossible for me duely
 to sanctifie it, if I come unto it hot
 and wreaking from my wordly bu-
 siness

finess. For, being I am to worship Part III
 God in spirit and in truth, with all Chap. 7
 my mind, soul and strength, and in a
 word with my whole man, evident
 it is that I am unable so to do, while
 my heart yet remains unemptied
 of the world: and being unfit to
 worship God, I am not, while so, in
 a due state to sanctifie this day.
 Wherefore the right sanctification
 of the Lords day is to begin with
 Preparation.

And it is a right wholesome insti-
 tution, that upon the Evening before
 it, there should be Prayers in every
 Parish Church, which is grown
 now too much into disuse by reason
 onely (that I can imagine) of the
 degeneracy of the age. If there be
 such custom kept up in my Parish,
 I would not, but upon necessity,
 be absent from those preparatory
 prayers: At which though I should
 be supposed to have been present,
 yet would I not content my self
 therewith: but, whether I have
 been imployed publickly in prepa-
 rations

Part. III
Chap. 7.

rations or not, in my course of devotion, on Saturday night, take so much more time than I do ordinarily, as might serve for some preparatory Meditations and Prayers.

The least which I can do to this purpose in my Meditations, is, *First*, To examine whether there be not some sin or sad miscarriage of the week past, which lies unrepented of, and so may blast my next daies performances. And if any there be, *secondly*, to consider of it more particularly, its aggravations, its nature, whether it be not such an one, part of the *Repentance* for which must be *Reconciliation*, *Restitution*, or somewhat like: and accordingly to apply my self to what I in my conscience, and in the feare of God do judge due repentance. *Thirdly*, to endeavour the emptying my head of worldly (at least distracting) cares, to bid them be gone now, till a day for them return: And lastly, so to contrive (as neer as I can) all my affairs

See Part

4.

Chap. 6.

Sec. 4, 5.

6.

affairs for the next day, that both I and my family may have as little avocations, or matters to call away our minds from holy dutys as may be. This by way of Meditation.

My Prayers must be suitable to my condition. If any such sin, as before mentioned, be found, that must be confessed, bewailed, and pardon craved, together with grace for the future against it: which may be done by putting in the mention of that sin in the proper *space* left for such purpose. But besides this, it will be necessary to add some particular petitions for due preparation or disposition of heart for the duties of the next day.

First, for a quiet, settled, and composed mind, so that I may attend, with all my soul, my holy concerns or business. *Secondly*, for enlivened affections, that I may not be dull and heartless, but of a tender and melting spirit. *Thirdly*, for a pliable, ductile, yielding and easie mind, that I may mix the word with faith,

Part, III faith, and render the obedience of
 Chap. 7. faith. *Lastly*, because both my
 own and the Congregations be-
 nefit and edification much de-
 pends upon the Ministers due and
 affectionate discharge of his office,
 it is therefore fit that I forget not
 him, but commend him to the
 assistance of the Spirit. To which
 purpose the following prayer may
 be either inserted in some fit place
 towards the end of my prayers or
 added to them,

O Lord, from whom the
 preparations of the heart
 are: The day now approach-
 eth which, being holy unto
 thee, I am to spend in thy
 more solemne worship. Many
 sins there are, by me not due-
 ly repented of, which may
 justly bring upon me a curse
 instead of a blessing. (Espe-
 cially

cially my [* *] may make Part. III.
Chap. 7.
my very prayers an abomi-
nation to thee.) But accept

thou I beseech thee
of this my confession
of them, and (at least
desired) sorrow for
them. Turn my heart
from them for the
future: and through

** Here insert the
mention of such
particular sins
which thou hast
found thy self
guilty of. &c.*

the blood of my Saviour to
remove the Guilt of them,
that they may not hinder
good things from me. Let
the effusions of thy grace both
upon me and all the Congre-
gations of thy people be
ever plentiful. Let my heart be
fixed, and none either vain
or worldly thoughts lodge
within me this night. Quicken
me by thy holy Spirit, that
I may draw near unto thee
with

Part III. with a true heart, and be fer-
Chap 7. vent in Spirit in thy service;
and with a good and honest
heart receiving thy word,
may understand and keep it
and bring forth fruit with pa-
tience, and unto perfection.
Remember thou thy servants
who are to dispence thy My-
steries unto thy people: and
especially him upon whose
teaching I am to wait. Pardon
their sins and frailties; Open
their mouths, guide their
minds and tongues, that they
may deliver thy truths in the
demonstration of thy Spirit:
and let thy work so prosper
in their hands, that both them-
selves and others may be built
up in our most holy faith, to
the perfecting thy Church,
and the eternal glory of thy
name

name thereby, through our Part. III.
 Lord and Saviour Christ Je- Chap. 8.
 sus. Amen.

Chap. VIII.

*Of the true manner of sanctifying
 the Lords day.*

Sect. I.

Generally before I go to Church.

NOW as to my Closet duties upon this day, least the sole consideration of them should breed any neglect, forgetfulness, or disturbance of the duties to be performed in the family, and in the publick assembly, it will be most expedient to consider the whole duties of that day, both publick, private and secret, and set down each in their naturall order.

First then, as upon no day we suppose

Part III Suppose our Christian to be sloth-
Chap 8. full, so least of all upon the Lords

day, but to be up in a convenient season, both himself and, if any are under his charge, to see that they are so too. A convenient season I call that, which, every mans health and occasions being considered, will agree therewith, and leave time sufficient for the discharge of the duties of the day. And supposing the publick service to begin generally about nine of the clock, between six and seven will be a good hour: and all things being well ordered may consist very well with most mens health and occasions. And of this time, which passeth between my rising and going to Church, if an hour and the odd parts be divided between the devotions of the family and the closet, so that halfe an hour be spent in the one, and the other half with the odd time in my closet, it may do very well; and the common occasions of most houses being considered, so much time may be allowed

lowed: If so much cannot be afforded to this work: yet let some; and what day soever I dispence with double prayers (I mean prayer in my closet, and prayer in my family) yet this day let me omit neither. It is a bad *omen* or an unhappy token to begin the sanctification of the Lords day, by the breach of my ordinary course of devotion, and an argument it is likely to be but negligently sanctified by me. Besides many in my family may perhaps make no other preparation for the worship of God than what they make by joyning in the family-devotions: it will be therefore the more necessary to make sure of thus much.

Sect. 2.

Of secret devotion in the Closet before going to Church.

NOW my private devotions will be for the main the same this day as others. Only in my Meditations it is to be remembered that I examine

Part III. Examine my self touching my preparations for the solemn worship of

Chap. 8. God that day: and if any thing in my preparatory devotion be wanting (any sin unconfessed, unrepented of, &c.) in these my morning devotions, let that be done. And how compleat soever I may conceive my preparations to have been; yet let me not in my prayers in private that morning forget to send up some petitions for preparing and assisting grace to the end I may more spiritually go through the duties of the day: for the doing of which I cannot now want directions, after a preparatory prayer already considered upon. And these my Closet devotions it will be necessary be first performed, for that they will very well fit me to perform my devotions in my family with more fervency.

Chap. 7.

Of private devotion in the family before going to Church. A digression touching what our devotion in the family is alwayes to consist of.

THese therefore being done, and it being now somewhat above halfe an hour till the time we usually go to Church, I am to call all my family (except in extraordinary cases of sickness, &c.) together to prayer; at which time all of them, who that day can goe to Church, which should be as many as may be, should appeare dressed as they are to go, that so, after the family devotions performed, within a very short space we might altogether resort to the publick place of Gods worship.

Now if question be made what the devotions of the family are to consist of, the answer is; they cannot well consist of less than these
two


Part III two parts, *Reading and Prayer.*

Chap. 8.

By *Reading* here I understand chiefly the reading the Word of God: and that it is the duty of the head of the family, either himself to read (or cause by some other to be read) the holy Scriptures in the hearing of the family; none can question, who considers those frequent Commands to the antient people of Deut. 4. God, *to teach their children the Law* 9. &c. *of God and his judgements, and dealings with them.*

Now how they can be taught those things by their parents, from whom they never hear of them, cannot be understood: nor will any reasonable person think these commands fulfilled by the meer teaching their Children the *Belief, Lords prayer, and ten Commandments* (though this must be most sure to be done) for we find of old they were to acquaint their children of Gods wonderful works in delivering them out of the *Land of Egypt:*
And

Private Devotion. 189

And in like manner we Christians Part III.
to teach our children Gods Miracles Chap. 3.
of grace, in freeing us by his Son 
out of the bondage of sin; which,
how it can be better done, than as
God hath thought fit to teach it to
the world, to wit by the Holy
Scriptures, none will easily find
out.

Now for the method to be observed in reading the Scriptures in our family, that which was above commended for use in the Closet may haply be most proper. And if I so order it, that I read the same portion of Scripture in my family, and in my closet, it may be much for my edification: the double reading it will set it deeper; both in my memory and in my understanding. But then, least I read faster and more in my family than in my closet, and for other reasons; it will be necessary that either my closet devotions go before my Family devotions, or that at least I so contrive my readings, that what I last read in my Closet,

Part. III set, I the next time read in my family.
 Chap. 8. mily.

Instead of Meditation which was one part of my Closet devotion, if in my family I use to examine my people, what they have learnt and observed out of what hath been read; and where none takes notice of what is mainly observable; there suggest it to them, it may not be amiss, provided it be done soberly (without a long deal of prate and meddling with curious matters) and without vain-glory.

The Prayers which I use in my family, except upon some very eminent occasions, may best be the Prayers of the Church. These are easie and best understandable: and the use of them in our families, will fit the plainest people in our family to use them with more devotion and understanding in the publick. Notwithstanding I confess my judgement in this case to be that the *Injunction* of them doth not in strictness reach to private families, but there is a liberty

Private Devotion. 191

berthy left; yet if we use that li-^{Part III.}
berthy only thus, so as freely and of^{Chap. 8.}
our own accord to prefer the Pray-
ers of the Church, I really judge
(generally) it will be the best,
Some particular cases there may be,
as when any great judgement lies
upon a family, or the like, which
may be admitted as exceptions to
the general rule, and in which cases
it may be expedient to use either
other or more Prayers than those
extant in our Church Liturgy.

The general course then of my
family devotions will be this. First,
he who prays begins with the last
clause of that Exhortation thus :
(*I pray and beseech you, as many as,
&c.*) Then follows the Confession :
(*Almighty and most mercifull.*)
The Absolution is to be left out, ex-
cept he be a Minister who read.
Then comes the Lords Prayer and
Versicles. Which being done, all
rising, give attention to one reading
a Psalm and a Chapter, or so much
of them as the chief of the family
shall

Part. III shall appoint. This being ended.

Chap. 8. if the Master of the family, or any by him deputed, will at that time examine, or briefly (as before said) instruct any touching what hath been read, here such examination will most seasonably come in: After which, he who reads the Prayers saying (*Let us pray*) all kneel down, and he begins with the Versicles, *O Lord shew thy mercy, &c.* and so proceeds with the Prayers in their order, as they stand, morning and evening. Added before the prayer of St. *Chrysostom* may be, the Prayer or Collect for all conditions of men; or the General Thanksgiving; or in fit seasons; the Ember week prayer, the Prayer for the High Court of Parliament; for suitable Weather, &c. with other Collects, at the discretion of the Master of the family.

Upon the Lords day in the morning, after the prayer for the Bishops, Clergy and people, that is just before the blessing, it may be convenient

ent to add, for preparing grace unto Part III.
all, the prayer in the beginning of Chap. 8.
the Communion Service [*Almighty
God to whom, &c.*] (or if there
be any fitter in the Liturgy found)
and that at the end of the Commu-
nion Service [*Prevent us, O Lord,
in all our doings with, &c.*]

And in the evening upon the
Lords day, after the same prayer for
the Bishops, &c. to add that prayer
for fruitfulness by the means of
grace, which is in the end of the
Communion Service: (*Grant, we
beseech thee, Almighty God, that, &c.*)
Thus much then as to the order of
devotion in the family, both or-
dinarily and upon the Lords day.

Sect. 4.

Of resorting to the Church.

THese devotions both in my Fa-
mily and Closet being thus per-
formed, It will soon be time to ap-
peare before God in the Church.
And I am to account no celebrating

Part. III. of the Lords day like to that in pub-
 Chap. 10. lick, with a full Congregation of
 Christian people? Hither therefore
 I early, with as many of my family
 as possibly (at least conveniently)
 I can, resort, both my self taking
 with me, if I can read, my Bible, and
 Common-prayer-book, and seeing
 that the rest of my family, who can
 read, do the same; And (especially
 if the way be long) I watch very
 narrowly over my self, and those of
 mine with me, that our discourse be
 not vain and idle, much less purely
 wordly, so as to unfit our hearts;
 and as to my private self, the same
 care am I to have of my thoughts.
 Seasonable it will be to think of the
 happiness which I enjoy, in that I
 come into the Courts of God, and
 feed upon the fat things of his
 House, and to praise God in my
 heart that I have such freedome of
 access unto him: in which ease ma-
 ny happy and proper Ejaculations
 may I furnish my self with, out of
 holy *David's Psalms*.

Sect.

Of due behaviour in the Church.

BEing come to the place, which is holy to Gods worship, I enter it with all reverence, bare, if my Sex so require, remembring that though God be present every where, yet is he more specially in the places where his people are worshipping him: and any postures of reverence, that I use there, are acts of worship unto his unseen but present Majesty, and therefore cannot but be mistaken very much, if judged by any superstitious. Having therefore orderly taken my place, I should (not out of custom but devotion) bow to God my knees, and beg his gracious presence and blessing towards me, and the congregation of his people that shall there meet that day, which I may do in this or the like form.

Part. III.
Chap. 8.

O Lord, who thought thou dwellest not in Temples made with hands, yet hast promised to meet and bless thy people wherever thou hast recorded thy Name; be pleased to be graciously present to thy servant here worshipping before thee, and to the Congregation of thy people, which shall here assemble themselves this day for thy worship. Pardon every one, who hath not prepared himself according to the preparation of the Sanctuary. Quicken us all for thy Names sake; teach us to do thy Will, and build us up in our most holy faith, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Private Devotion. 197

I know there are some who ob- Part III.
Cha p. 8.
ject against this practice, but I could
never yet see any reason in their
pretensions.

This therefore being done, if the
Congregation be not yet fully met,
it is not for me to imploy my self in
vain discourse with any of my
neighbours: but either to meditate
on somewhat which may be season-
able, or, if I can, to read.

And it may not be improper, till
I am well versed in it, and know my
duty therein well, to read the
Church Liturgy, Rubrick (that
is, the directions which are mingled
with the prayers, for their use) and
all, taking one day some part of it,
and another day another, till I have
gone through it wholly. By this
means, discreetly used, I shall be able
more readily to joyne with the pub-
lick in the use thereof. But if the
Congregation be fully met, and Ser-
vice beginning or begun, I am to
yield all possible attention, remem-
bring God requires my whole man,

Part. III all mine heart, soul and mind; yea
Chap. 8. and my very body too: Where-
fore so I am to place and order even
that (I mean my very body) as
the worship of God, and the Church
instructions for the worship of
that God, require; *kneeling, stand-
ing and answering* stil wheresoever
I ought. Nor am I to censure any
thing if I do not yet understand its
use: for by so much as I do under-
stand, I cannot but in a good mea-
sure see the wisdom and pious in-
tentions of the Church: By those
answers, which I with the rest of the
people are to make, I find my self
much quickened, and my wandring
heart many times called home; the
use therefore of these, as I should
not omit, so should the benefit which
I have found by them, be an argu-
ment to me, to conform my self to
every other practice enjoyned, not
doubting, but that all of them will
in the end have as good an effect as
this upon me.

During the celebration of Gods
worship,

Private Devotion. 199

Part III.

Chap. 8.

worship, if my mind at any time
be run away from my work, I am,
as soon as ever I perceive it, secretly
to check my self, to call it home,
and in my heart say, *Lord pardon and*
help thy servant, or some such thing,
and, in a word, to imploy it as fully
as I can about my business, remem-
bring not only how displeasing it is
to God but how unprofitable to my
self to draw near unto him with my
body only, and honour him with
my lips, when my soul is afar
off.

Whatsoever I hear of the Word,
read or preached, I must remember
all along to apply unto my self, not
carping at, or censuring the Preach-
er, but taking all in the best sense,
(*possibly it may be long of my sins he*
said no better; or so ill) nor looking
so much how it concerns others, as
my own particular state and man-
ners. And if there be any thing
which more neerly toucheth and
concerneth me, that let me be sure
by some means or other to keep or

Part. III. set home upon my memory: per-
 Chap. 8. haps there may be some place of
 Scripture cited to confirm, explain,
 or illustrate it; let me note that
 place, and the being able to find it,
 may, in case I am forgetful, bring the
 matter to my remembrance.

The exercises of divine worship
 being all ended, I am with the same
 reverence to depart the Church
 with which I entered it (not rudely,
 hastily and disorderly, as the com-
 mon manner of the multitude is):
 courteously saluting any of my
 neighbours; which I have occasion
 to salute, and that with inward love
 and good will: remembering that
 the ancient Christians had such an
 usage at their Assemblies, as the *Kiss*
of Charity; it is but a Christian
 therefore for me to use a charitable
 and chearful Salutation of any of
 my Christian neighbours.

Rom 16.

1. 16.

5 Thel.

26.

1. Pet. 5.

14.

Self

Sect 6.

Part III
Chap. 8.

*Of due behaviour between the Morn-
ing and Evening Service.*

MY return with my family home should be with the same gravity and care, with which was my passage to the Church: my talk rather of what I heard or learnt; than of any worldly matter, except necessary occasions enforce the contrary. And being come home, one of my first businesses should be to step aside into my Closet, if possibly I can, and there, according as I have found my self affected, to apply my self unto God. If I have been awakened to any duty, raised to any hopes of Gods favour, strengthened in any of my holy resolutions, informed of any thing touching which I was ignorant, or the like, there briefly to bless God for it: if I have been dull and unprofitable, there to bewail it; both which may be done after this or some such sort. I

Parr. III
Chap. 8.

I Bless, thee O Lord my God,
for the comforts of thy
House; for thy awakenings
of me to my duty; for any
softenings of my heart, and
sence of thy love, or hopes of
enjoying thee hereafter. Not
unto me, O Lord, not unto me,
who am a vain, hard-hearted,
sinful wretch of my self, but to
thy holy Name be the praise.
Now increase, I beseech thee,
this thy goodness to me; and
confirm me in thy Grace ever-
more; Let me grow in the
knowledge, fear and love of
thee; and any impressions
thereof, which I have this day
received, suffer me not to
loose; but enable me to
bring forth fruit unto per-
fection, to the glory of thy
Name,

Name, through Jesus Christ, Part III
 my blessed Lord and Media- Chap 8
 tor. *Amen.*

If this Prayer may not suit with my condition, it may be presumed, that as I have knowledge enough to see it doth not, so I have abilities enough, in some tollerable way, to represent and bewail before God my barrenness, heedlesness, wordiness, carnality, and whatever other great distempers I find in my soul, which accordingly I ought briefly to do. And this being done, let me recollect my self, and view over in my mind those severals, which I have that day learned or been affected with: for this will further imprint them upon the memory. Less than a quarter of an hour may suffice hereto: and though haply sometimes I may see occasion to allow more, yet so much sure I may afford at all times.

Having thus fastned upon my
 spirit

Part. III
Chap. 8.

spirit my spiritual gains, I now depart to my company for the necessary refreshment of my body which this day was not appointed to abridge me of. Let me therefore be chearful, and eating my meat in singleness of heart: rejoyce before my God: but let not my joy by any means be wanton, idle, vain, or intemperate.

Of the rest of the time which passeth between the publick duties of the day, the imployment ought to be sacred, at least wholesome, and such which may not indispose me for the remaining part of the daies work: and hereof much care is to be had.

First, As to my discourse: touching which if it be the Apostles Precept, at all times to be observed, that *our speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt*; certainly more specially ought it to be such on this day. And though it cannot be accounted absolutely sinful to converse about secular matters of concernment, if occasion

occasion so require, yet, 1. To be wholly taken up with these can-
not but argue a greater care of this world, than sense of Christianity; if so be there be any truth in that Speech of him who is Infal-
lible: *Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.* And, 2. To be
needlessly meddling with such affairs, or idely busying our selves about other mens actions and concerns (which are the ordinary subject of mens discourses after dinner on the Lords day) is at the best but a mixture of worldliness and vanity: and it is made the character of naughty men, that *their tongues walk through the earth.*

Part. III.
Chap. 8.

Mat. 12.
34.

Psal. 73. 9.

Secondly, As to my actions care too is to be taken: Its not question-
less unlawful upon due occasion; that is, on account of mine own or others necessity, or considerable conveniency, to put mine hands to an ordinary action, as is evident
from our Saviours both Doctrine and Practice: But as abovesaid
of

Luk. 13.
15.

Prta III. of discourse so now of business
Chap 8. to be needlessly imployed in wordly
matters and ordinary work, cannot
but be some kind of profanation
of the day, as being contrary to its
sanctification, that is, the spending
it to other uses and ends, than
those for which it was set apart.
And albeit in this case no certain
perpetual rule is to be set, (the con-
ditions of men being various) but
each mans Christian discretion and
piety ought to meet out to himself
what he in his own conscience, and
in the fear of God considering his
occasions, judgeth fit (in which
we are not one to judge another.)
notwithstanding I cannot think that
man takes such care of himself as he
ought, or is duely cautious of indispo-
sing his heart for his duty, who can
constantly suffer all this time, be-
tween morning and Evening ser-
vice, to pass over with him without
any thing of devotion, either in his
privacy or family, or just as the same
time passeth over every day. This

I say, cannot be to sanctifie the day, because not to sepearate it from common, and to use it to distinct ends. Part. III.
Chap. 8.

Soon therefore after dinner ended amongst all the family, it is meet that I call the younger sort and set them to the learning their Catechisme: and as to the Elder, if I suspect any of them to be apt to trifle away their time, let them be kept in my presence; and if all of them be able, let them read by course somewhat out of the scripture, or some plain and honest book; if all be not, then such as can.

Sect. 7.


Of resorting to Evening service.

WHen it is now almost time to resort to Evening service let all be called together to the end that all may orderly repair with me to the publick Assembly. And it may not be amiss (but right edifying) if some one person read a Psalm
suitable

Part III. suitable to the present undertaking
 Chap 8. of going to worship God (such as

is the lxxxiv. or the cxix. one or two parts of it being taken at a time, as occasion or time shall serve) to which reading all ought reverently to attend. And this being done, let the same rules and directions, which were given touching going to Church in the morning, be observed in the Evening, and all as before resort to the publick worship. Which if they do, I and my family are now a second time attentively and reverently placed before God in his House of Prayer; where my carriage ought to be the same, as is before directed to. And surely unless I and my house appear thus the second time before God, I cannot account my self duly to sanctifie the Lords day, I have done it onely by halves. The Church was never in a settled condition, but it had the Evening as well as the Morning sacrifice; *Vespers* as well as *Mattins*.

If therefore any thing should so fall

Tell out, that I or mine are hindered Part. III.
 from the second part of the publick Chap. 8.
 duties of the day, it ought to be my 
 grief and sorrow, *Psal. 42. 4.*

Sect. 8.

Of the duties after return from Evening service.

MY departure from the Church
 and my retirement as soon as
 I come home for about a quarter of
 an hour, or as I see occasion, should
 be, after the same sort, as in the former
 part of the day. Which being
 done, it will be expedient to come
 amongst my people, and see that
 all things are wisely ordered; that so
 some time before night, the devotions
 of the family may be performed.
 In the mean time, both I my
 self, and as many of the family as can
 be spared from necessary services,
 are free to our private devotions.
 Only if there are any trifles, let
 them and the younger sort be dealt
 with, as after dinner, that is, kept
 where

Part III. where the people most commonly
 Chap. 8. sit, reading and attending to the
 Word of God, at least for some
 certain space. Let them not spend
 their time as they do ordinarily:
*for the Lords day should look with
 another face than common days all the
 day long.*

This care being taken of my self
 and family, I see not but my Christi-
 an liberty permits me any honest re-
 freshment, such as may be walking
 forth in my garden, in the fields or
 open air. Onely let me observe
 these cautions. 1. That my walk
 be some such as *Isaacs* Evening
 walk was, that my Meditations be
 good. Unquestionably I shall not
 find the fields an unfit place for good
 thoughts: There are many in the
 world, whom the very breathing the
 free air, the beholding the glorious
 light of Heaven, the passing clouds,
 the verdant earth, and smiling face
 of all things, transports into a rap-
 ture of devotion, affects very much
 with the admiration of the Creator
 of

- Private Devotion. 211

of all things, makes too too long for Part III.
the time, when either they shall a- Chap. 8.
scend above them all, or see them
pass away, and dwell ever with their
God, beholding his face without any
such interpositions. And with much

advantage may a man spend an hour
thus, mixing often prayers or eja-
culations with these his thoughts.

2. Another caution I should ob-
serve is, That I return so early, as
that neither my Devotions in my
Closet nor in my family, may be
omitted. And truly most conveni-
ent will it be, that my own private
devotions (which being that I
look on my self bound to on other
dayes, I cannot this day omit) be
performed before that supper which
I take: for then shall I be freshest;
then will what I have learnt that day
be better in my memory, than after
the diversions which my supper and
company may cause. Besides that,
the performance of them will have
fixed and prepared my spirit against
any such diversions, and for the
performance

Part III

Chap. 8.

performance of devotion in the family. Which practice too on other evenings may not be improper, but possibly, by reason of my constitution, convenient is not necessary.

Now as to what I am this evening to perform in my Closet, it is the same, for the most part, as at other times. My course of reading must be the same: only if so be that I see fit, the portion which I read larger. My Meditations, (besides what is every days task) upon what I read, may take in a view of my carriage that day; an enquiry what I have learnt; a considering so as to affect my self with it; and a setting down a resolution to endeavour in all my wayes a practice of it. My prayers may take in some new Confessions, [of my *unprofitableness*, *hardheartedness*, *unsettledness*] petitions (for *pardon*, *memory to retain*, and *grace to perform* what I have learned) Thanksgivings (for any *quickenings of heart*, *resolution of holiness*, any *instruction*, or *improvement*

Private Devotion.

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Part III.
Chap. 8.

Provement of my Christian knowledge, &c.) all suitable to what in my Meditations I have found mine estate to be: for the inserting or putting in of which, I shall easily find in my usual prayers fit places.

My Closet devotions being thus performed, time it will now be for me and my family to take what Evening meal we use: which being done in some convenient time before we goe to bed (which ought not for many reasons to be too late) If I am a pious Christian I cannot but look upon my self bound to shut up the day in my family with some such devotions as I begun it with. Touching which some directions have been already given, as to Reading and Prayer: and it is onely to be added that I am to make some inquiry severally into those, who are under my charge, touching their improvements that day; to help out and instruct the ignorant; to rebuke, and that sharply, the negligent and heedless; to encourage

Part. III. rage the careful as my Christian
Chap. 8 discretion shall see meet: the pro-
 perest place for which, will be either
 before the prayers begin, or just
 after the reading of the Scriptures,
 so that the family may be dismissed
 and the day ended with prayers.

PART

PART IV

Of most solemn Retirement into the Closet for Humiliation.

Chap. I.

An Account of what it is to be treated of, particularly in this part.

MY most solemn retirement into my Closet, and that for which the place is most principally designed, is upon such days or times, which I set apart to humble my

Part. III. my self for my sins before God. by
 Chap. 1. *Fasting and Prayer and Mourning*
 and all acts of Contrition.

And truly if the ordinary Fasting days of the Church were duly by all observed, all that our present design would seem to call for, were to deliver the manner of their private observation, that is, the particular duties to be on them performed. But forasmuch as most men keep them ordinarily no otherwise, than by a little change of diet, taking perhaps fish &c. for flesh, and feeding, neither more sparingly, nor much less deliciously, than they do on other days, and so make them indeed no fasting days, we must consider both of the *Sitting apart* of days for private fasting, and of their *Observation* when set apart. But first of all it will be necessary to spend a few thoughts upon the nature and ends of *Fasting*.

Chap. II.

Of the Nature and Ends of Fasting.

BY Fasting here is meant a Religious *abstaining from* our lawful food. Lawful food at present we will account that, which, according to the common practice of sober and discreet persons of our rank and quality, is neither too much nor too dainty for us. For we may account a man intemperate in his feeding as well by being too delicate and fine, and eating constantly on things which are fit chiefly for persons above his degree, as by eating overmuch. Now not all abstaining from this my lawful food is that *Fasting*, which is here intended: for I may abstain for my healths sake, or through business, or (by some accidents) upon necessity,
L and

Part. IV and all (it may very well be) with-
 Chap. 2 out sin, and yet not fast as fasting
 signifies a duty, or an act accepta-
 ble to God: but it must be a Reli-
 gious abstaining, which I can duly
 call Fasting, as at present that name
 is used: Now it will be best discern-
 ed to be Religious, (1) by the ends
 which I design to my self therein,
 and (2) by my *employment* of my self
 upon such my Fasting days.

See Dr.
 Ham-
 mond
 Pract.
 Catech.
 Lib. 3.
 Sect. 3.

First, as to the ends and designs
 of him who abstains or fasts Reli-
 giously; the chief of them are

1. Devotion, or the performance
 of Religious exercises: when I fast,
 that I may have more leisure and be
 fresher for *Reading, Meditation, and*
Prayer.

2. Mortification: when I fast to
 tame my flesh, to *keep under* and
beat down my body, that it may be
 in due obedience to the commands
 of God and reason.

3. Liberality: when I fast to deal
 my bread unto the hungry, and
 either deprive my self or feed more
 slenderly

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slenderly, that I may have the more Part III
wherewith to relieve others. Chap. 2.

4. Sympathising with the sufferings of others: when I fast out of a fellow feeling of the afflictions of Gods people, commiserating their condition, and, through an abundance of charity, desiring, as it were to partake with them in their sufferings.

5. Exercising my self to the obedience of Christs commands: when I fast out of self-denial, and (when I both would and could eat) by fasting, as by one particular act of obedience to that general command of denying my self, *exercise my self unto godliness.*

6. Diverting or removing Gods wrath, and expressing my sorrow and humiliation for sin: when Gods wrath either resting upon my country or friends, or self, or hanging over any of our heads, I fast and deprecate it, and beg pardon of all those evils, which have brought us into such misery and danger.

Part. IV 7. An holy revenge or punish-
 Chap. 2 ment of my self: when having re-
 2 Cor. 7. pented of some sin, for which I am
 11. holily angry with my self, I choose
 thus to punish and chastise my self
 for my former, (it may be) luxury,
 wantonness or the like.

When I say out of any of these
 intentions, or with these designs I
 abstain from my lawful meat, I then
 fast in the sense that fasting is now
 taken: for this is (thus far) Religi-
 ously to abstain; and no doubt, but
 such abstaining is acceptable unto
 God, if all be as right as my inten-
 tions, that is, if suitable performan-
 ces or devotions be added, which is
 the second point constituting a Re-
 ligious Fast, and touching which,
 rules will anon be considered, when
 the nature of fasting is a little further
 looked into, and it is evident that it
 is a duty, and no such needless mat-
 ter as men usually seem to take it for,
 if we may judge of what they think
 by what they do.

Chap. III.

That Fasting is a Christian Duty.

NOW that none either suspicion
touching its necessity, or ex-
cuse for its neglect may be left,
it will be expedient to consider what
Evidence may be brought that Fast-
ing is a Christian duty. And

Indeed there needeth little
more to be urged for the proving it
a duty, besides the recollection and
summing up those excellent ends to
which it serveth and conduceth. No
doubt but to humble my self for my
sins, to pray earnestly for pardon,
and for the turning away of Gods
wrath are duties; no doubt but to
keep under my body and make it
subject, to relieve the poor, to sym-
patise with the afflictions of Joseph,
are duties: now to all these is fast-

Part. IV. ing a means, and of some of them
 Chap. 3. (besides) an expression. No doubt
 but to *deny my self*, and to take up-
 on my self *an holy revenge* for my
 former extravagancies, are duties:
 Now of these is Fasting a part. It
 may therefore hence sufficiently be
 concluded a duty.

2. A further evidence of the
 same I take it to be, that *Fasting* is
 by our Saviour, in that Sermon of
 his upon the Mount, which delivers
 to us the sum of the Christian Law,
 or rule of Evangelical duties, ranked
 with *Prayer* and *Alms-giving*;
 (which are undoubted duties) and
 rescued from the Pharisaical abuses
 of it, the true manner of it being
 insinuated: Insomuch that it may
 be justly demanded, how comes it
 to stand in the Christian law? to
 what end needed its practice to be
 vindicated from corruption, and
 asserted as it is by Christ, to its pu-
 rity, if it were not a Christian duty?
 Besides

Mat. 6. 2
 6, 15.
 compa-
 red.

3. We find God in its season cal-
 ling

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ling for it; of old by his prophet *Joel*, Part IV
Sanctifie a Fast, call an Assembly, Chap. 3.
 which place though it intend a public Fast, yet when the case shall be
 so with a private person, as the Prophet supposeth it with that people,
 it will by *Analogy*, and in reason hold of a private one. And it is evident our Saviour in St. *Matthew*
 spoke of those private Fasts, which every one is by him supposed to
 consecrate unto God. Who knows not that the *Afflicting of the soul*
 (touching which we meet with so many commands, and such frequent
 mention in the old Testament) doth mainly intend fasting? And as to
 the new Testament, further yet: though our Saviour once tels us, the
 season for his Disciples fasting was not then come, while the Bride-
 groom was with them, yet at the same time he tels us, its season would
 not be long too, and then they should fast. *Mat. 9. 15.*

4. Again, the constant sence of the world, and of all the Saints of

L. 4 God

Part. IV. God in all ages (amongst whom by
 Chap. 3. how much soever any have been
 more zealous, by so much the more
 hath he been in the exercise of fast-
 ing) is an argument (no whit con-
 temptible) of its being a duty. Not
 onely the Saints under the Law fast-
 ed, and the Pharisee too twice a
 week, but the devout Christians
 have ever been to us ensamples here-
 of. And,

5. (Which sets it off with more
 advantage) we find not onely the
 commendation of them for this
 practice, but the recompence of it
 with many signal blessings recorded
 in Scripture: which recompence
 God doth not use to give to will-
 worship. Thus we find *Anna* com-
 mended for her continuing in the

Luke 2. Temple day and night, *serving God*
 36. *with Fastings and Prayers*. And it
 is observeable, that *fasting* is there
 reckoned as one part of her *serving*
God. That blessed vision, which
 led *Cornelius* to the knowledge of

Act. 10. Christ was vouchsafed to him upon
 a day

a day when he had fasted till about the ninth hour (which is with us three a clock) and then too we find him not at meat, but prayer. Part IV
Chap. 3

All which cannot but enforce that though it be not *always* and indispensably a duty, as is Faith, Repentance, Charity, and such others; yet is it as far a duty, as any thing can be that is not required absolutely and for it self; and that therefore whensoever there is occasion for it (and no Christian can be long without due occasions requiring it) it is to be performed; and being so, if it should be performed in manner of a free-will offering, or oftner than in strictness the Christian might seem to have need of it, yet if it be done as it should be, it is likely to be acceptable to God.

But this makes it seasonable to enquire how often a Christian is to fast.

Part IV.

Chap. 4.

Chap. IV

*How often a Christian is to
Fast.*

IN answer whereunto it must be said, that no certain or constant rule, as to all persons can or may be given herein: nor will the times of fasting be the same to all, some men having more need, others less (if not need yet) opportunity. We are assured by the ends to which it serves, that many mens particular conditions (which haply leave them none other means to mortifie the flesh but this) make it a duty very necessary for them to be much in. On the other side, those who ever feed sparingly and temperately, and have an evener constitution, less inclined to carnality and inordinate affections, than have other men, seem to have least need of this taming discipline. And those whose labours
are

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are daily and hard, and whose life is servile, many times neither have so much need; nor so much opportunity of fasting, as have those whose life is easier. Yet forasmuch as it is (according to what hath been above insinuated) a piece of *Afflicting a mans soul*, and so a necessary piece of contrition and repentance (which hath commonly somewhat of *indignation* against a mans self in it) there is none who can think himself wholly dispensed with for it, or to have no need at all of it. But I say every mans conscience and Christian discretion must in the feare of God set to himself the rule, how often he is to fast: for that every one best knows his own needs, and it would be very sinful in some not to use more strict and oftner fastings than others; and some on the contrary must be very injurious to themselves, should they use so much fasting as others (if they duely consider their leisure and condition) cannot but think themselves in duty bound

Part IV
Chap. 4

Part. IV
Chap. 4.

bound to. This is the sum of what in general may be positively determined. Yet it is worthy our consideration, and may be a guide to particular persons to remember.

First, that it is a practice of very great antiquity to fast twice a week and was in use as is evident before our Saviour's days, and by him not censured in the Pharisee upon any other account, than because he was proud and conceited of it, using to reflect upon it in ostentation of his own holiness, and scorn of others. And it is a very worthy note of St. Chrysostome, that we should onely avoid the Pharisees' pride, but not neglect his performances; as on the other side, forsake the Publicans' sins; but retain his humility. There is also a constitution, which although perhaps it pretend to more authority and antiquity than it ought, yet must be acknowledged to be ancient and not unreasonable, that we should fast *wednesdays* and *Fridays*.

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days because on the one the Lord Part, IV.
was betrayed, and on the other cru. Chap. 4.
cified: and it is beyond controversie Constitut;
that the primitive Christians used to a Clem;
have their solemn assemblies up- Roman 3
on those days, not much less con- collect.
stant than upon the Lords days. Lib. 5.
Cap. 15.

Secondly, that if this course be not alwayes to be used. (which yet I know not what should hinder, except a man want leisure) yet at certain seasons, as in *Lent* and *Ember weeks*, the commands and custom of the Church will engage me to as much as this amounts to, if not to more. And he to whom the commands of our present, and continued practice of the Catholique Church in devotionals signifie nothing, is surely a man of a strange humourous sanctity.

Lastly, it is out of question that there is no Christian can walk strictly and keep a good conscience towards God and man, who hath not his solemn set days for the performing that great and weighty duty of
Dr. Hammonds.
Pract.
Catech.
hamm- Lib. 3.

Part. IV

Chap 4

humiliation, in calling himself to an account for all his wayes, and confessing his sins more particularly before God: and those days should not be too slow in their returns [that is, too seldom] least his soul should be too deep in arrears [that is, lest there should be such a long score of his sins unrepented of, that he think it an infinite and endless work to repent of them] and so be loath to come to account at all. It is very reasonable therefore for every man and woman of any tolerable leisure to set apart one day in a week for this purpose, or if the whole day, or any other part of it may not be spared from the business of his calling, yet the dinner time that day may be borrowed from eating, and thus more usefully employed without disturbance to the affairs or injury to the health of any ordinary person. I do not say that this day ought always to be one and the same: it may be one week one day, and the next another, according as my occasions will best bear: nay even after

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after I have appointed it, upon un-
expected events, it may undoubtedly
be altered without sin, but wholly
neglected it cannot be without a
sinful omission, except upon some
urgent or more than ordinary bus-
iness.

Part. IV.

Chap. 5.

Chap. V.

Of the Preparatory acts for Pri- vate Fasting daies.

THe worship of God is ever best
celebrated, when some kind of
preparation is made for it: It will
be meet therefore that somewhat I
do by way of preparation for my
private fasts.

And one piece of preparation as
well for these days as for the Lords
day it self (though indeed somewhat
remote, or afar off) it will be, to
be diligent other daies in my call-
ing, and well to husband both my
time

Part. IV time and estate. For if he, who
 Chap. 5 hath not by his six daies labour
 made such provision for himself and
 his, as that he may be without care
 of providing upon the seventh day,
 will scarce rest that seventh day
 unto God without distraction (as
 seems to be suggested to us by those
 words [*Six days shalt thou labour*]
 being put into the fourth Comman-
 dement) much less will he be able
 to allow himself constantly more
 time in a week than a seventh day
 comes to, to wit some part of every
 day, and a considerable part besides
 of one of the six daies (which is to
 be his fast) to the service of God.
 I would therefore have every man
 not to incumber himself in this
 world more then he needs must.
 We should learn to know when we
 have enough, and allow our selves
 some part of our time to enjoy as
 well as all to get. But this is prepa-
 ration very far off.

The first act of more immediate
 preparation for these my fasting
 daies

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daies will be, prudently to contrive, Part IV.
Chap. 3.
upon foresight and consideration of my weeks business, what day or daies they are, in which I can best spare time for this work: and those daies, or that day will be the fittest to be pitched upon, in which I may the most freely converse with God without the disturbance, which much business necessarily brings. Besides the time spent in my ordinary course of devotions, which are not upon my fasts to be omitted, under pretence of making amends for them, or running them up into my Penitentiary performances, I cannot upon those daies when I allow least, allow less than two hours, and upwards, to the peculiar work of my fasts. So much time therefore, at the least, I say, I must resolve such a day to devote.

Which being resolved upon, it will be fit (as a second act of my more immediate preparation) in the devotions of the evening before, to spend a petition or two in my prayers

Part IV
Chap. 5.

ers to God, that he would by his gracious Spirit *prepare* me for the work which I intend the next day, *softning* my heart, and *giving me to understand my errors*; that I may duly lament them and truly amend them; which Petitions I may easily see a fit place to insert in my prayers. And the day being come, unto my morning devotions, it will be expedient to add some such short prayer, as this which follows.

O Lord, who seest the purposes of all hearts, and hast been privy to the intentions of thy servant touching calling himself this day to an account of his wayes, and humbling himself before thee for all his transgressions; Be thou in mercy present to me by the preventings and assistance of thy grace, that I may, with a true heart and
con-

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contrite spirit, perform what I intend. Grant that no worldly cares or business may so take off my mind from thee, but that I may be able forthwith to return, and without distraction to imploy my whole soul in my designed devotions; to the glory of thy Name, my own amendment and comfort here, and everlasting blessedness hereafter, in and through thy Son Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen.

And lastly, my morning devotions being thus finished, until the time come that I have resolved to retire, I must endeavour to converse, and behave my self in my ordinary affairs, so warily as that nothing may discompose, disorder, or disturb me; no worldly design too much possess my thoughts, according as above I have prayed.

Chap.

Chap. VI.
The order of Humiliation or Penitentiary Devotions.

Section 1.

The entrance unto the work.

THAT time being now come, which I appointed to spend with God in my Closet, I must religiously observe mine appointment: For albeit the resolve was only private, and never proceeded without my own breast or closet, yet hath God taken notice of it, and it stands on record in his omniscience; and by breaking these my private and (as haply I may judge) less material resolutions, I shall soon learn to break my word and vows too in other matters, both with God and man.

Coming

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Coming therefore at my time appointed into my Closet, I reverently kneel down before God, and having the sense of his presence, and all-seeing eye upon mine heart, humbly begin in some such short prayer, as is this which follows.

I Am come, O Lord, into thy presence, upon work, which no one hath more need to do than my self, to consider my wayes, and repent of my sins, and turn to thee. But I have an hard heart, not apt to relent; and dry eyes, such, at least, which seldom shed tears for my sins. O that thou wouldest bow the Heavens, and come down, and melt my soul in such godly sorrow, which might work repentance not to be repented of. Open mine eyes and help me to see into mine heart: Bring my

Part. IV
Chap. 6.

my sins to my remembrance, and
set them in order before me, that
an holy shame and confusion
may cover my face for them,
and thou beholding my contri-
tion maist accept it, and both
pardon me, and assist me here-
after by thy grace, that I may
live more *godlily, righteously,*
and *soberly* in this present world,
and attain unto blessedness with
thy self in the world to come,
through the merits of Christ
Jesus my Lord and Saviour.
Amen.

my
me to see into mine heart: Bring
of Open mine eyes and help
repentance not to be repented
say, O how, which might work
down, and melt my soul in such
bow the Heavens, and come
my face, O that thou wouldst
see which wouldst see that
face and thy eyes, which
Amen.

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Part IV.

Chap. 6.

Sect. 2.

*Of Reading, so as to fit my self for
Self-examination.*

SOME such supplication being with all my heart made unto God, I may haply find it not to be alwayes the best course forthwith to fall upon the examination of my self: For, for this I shall be the fitter when awakened and made more attentive to my self by some other exercise. It may be proper therefore to spend an hour in the reading some honest practical Book, which treateth severally of those duties which we owe both to God, others and our selves; to wit, upon that particular Book, which knowing to be very good, I have chosen and singled out to my self to read and practice, such as are, the never enough commended Doctor Hammonds *Practical Catechisme*, or (if that seem to any too difficult) that

no

Part. IV no less excellent than plain and truly
 Chap. 6. Learned Book, *The whole Duty of*
Man, (for the Author of which,
 our whole Church owes praises unto
 God, and if he be yet alive, pray-
 ers.) And in my reading hereof, I
 must endeavour to read:

First, with understanding: so that
 it is not so much the repeating to
 my self the words, as considering
 and digesting the substance of them,
 which I must account reading of
 them. I must therefore read and
 study the Book as Schollars do their
 Books; and if there be any mate-
 rial thing which I do not understand,
 mark it, so that I may inform my
 self, by advising with some more able
 person than my self.

Secondly, I must read all with ap-
 plication to my self, remembering
 that all this concerns me, and endea-
 vouring to see how it concerns me;
 whether I perform the duty I read
 of as I should, or how I neglect it,
 &c.

By this means, taking upon every
 of

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of my fasting daies a part, my Book Part IV.
Chap. 6.
will in convenient season be read
over: which when it is, it must not
be thrown aside, but read through
again, and again, with the same dili-
gence till I am perfect in it. Nor
ought the third or fourth reading of
a good profitable and practical
Treatise, to be tedious or unpleasant
to me: for that Christian duties
are not new, but have been, and al-
wayes will be the same, and multi-
tude of books do but confound plain
heads. All wise men know, that to
make a mans self master of one good
book is better than to have slightly
read an hundred, which were not
either thoroughly understood or di-
gested, To keep therefore thus to
one good book, which may instruct
me of the sum of my Christian du-
ty, till I have fully made it mine
own, is my most edifying course.

M

Sect.

Of Self-examination, and the view of
our life.

THis my Exercise of reading being over, it will be seasonable
1. Of sins. now to fall to the examination of
my self touching my *sins*. And here
I shall find a very good help of the
former work of reading, especially
after some considerable use of it,
when I am once come to know my
several duties: for certain it is, *No
man can see what he hath done amiss,
what he hath left undone* (which two
heads, Of Omission and Commission,
contain under them all actual sins)
till he seeth what he should have
done. Now this duty of self exa-
mination, a man may be supposed
either to be a stranger in, and little
to have practised, or else to have
been much in it, and to be thoroughly
verst in his heart and life.

He who is a stranger to it, hath
unque-

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unquestionably more work to do Part IV
 than the other. That he may there Chap. 6.
 fore do his business thoroughly he
 must begin with those very first
 years which he can remember, and
 trace sin from his infancy, through
 his youth, to his riper and present
 years. He must see what Devil
 first entred him, I mean, what sins
 first seized him, how they have
 grown up and continued with him.
 Singularly useful in this case will be
 those Heads of Self-examination, in
 that admirable honest book, *The*
whole Duty of Man, in the devo-
 tional part annext thereto, pag. 425.
 the use and application of which is
 also shewed at the end of those
 heads. But this will be too long a
 work for an hour or two. Such a per-
 son therefore had need to set apart
 whole daies for this purpose, till he
 hath a little recovered himself, and
 set his accounts straiter with God.
 Yet must he not, while he is enqui-
 ring after unknown or forgotten
 sins, neglect to repent of his fresher

Part IV. and known transgressions. If there-
Chap. 6. fore so it is, that for the present he
cannot recollect himself, and make a
diligent search into the whole course
of his life, yet must he confess and
bewail what he knows of himself,
and together acknowledge how
much he is in arrears, which he hath
forgotten, or at present doth not see,
and for all humbly beg mercy. But
this not so, as wholly to put off fur-
ther enquiry: but having this Fast
examined himself touching so many
years or moneths (according as his
life finds his thoughts work) upon
his next Fast to proceed farther, and
so on the next still farther, till he
come home to his present age. Now
in this sifting of my life, if I can, it
will be very useful to me, and much
further a distinct Repentance, to use
my Pen, and through each year set
down my sins: By this means I shall
be able much better to consider
them, and so, both know more of
my self, and of the deceitful wayes,
which sin hath to gain upon me.

And

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And because as I owe to God Part IV
Confession and repentance of my Chap. 6.
sins, so I owe also acknowledgment
 and *thanks* for his *Mercies*, therefore
 in this enquiry, it will be necessary 2. Of
 to observe Gods remarkable Mer- Blessings.
 cies and deliverances to me, record-
 ing these also year by year, as my
 sins.

Thus will the sight of his Mercies
 aggravate my sins, and encrease my
 repentance; and the sight of my sins,
 parallel with his mercies, commend
 his goodness and inhance my thank-
 fulness, both which are singular
 benefits.

And because even afflictions have 3. Of Af-
 their use, and are to be accounted flictions.
 for; if therefore I find any confi-
 derable adversity or cross with
 which God hath exercised me, this
 also is to be registred as the former.
 If it did me good, I owe to God
thanks for it: if not, I owe *repen-*
tance for being incorrigible.

Being thus come to my present
 time, it will become me not to run

Part. IV. in arrears again, but every Fast day
 Chap. 6. still to make my accounts even; and
 to that purpose to take care, as a-
 foresaid, that these my Fasts be not
 too seldom.

Supposing therefore, that I am a
 person who have so far practised
 self-examination, as that I have for-
 merly taken account of all my life,
 That, which I shall have chiefly to
 enquire into, upon each return of
 these my fasting daies, will be,

First, what new sins or *commis-*
sions I have been guilty of since my
 last day of accounting.

Secondly, What *neglects*: espe-
 cially, if I have formerly made any
 vows or new engagements to God,
 how I have observed or slighted
 them.

Thirdly, In what posture or *tem-*
per my heart hath continued, and at
 present is; whether soft, tender,
 penitent and in awe of God; or
 whether dull, careless, insensible, or
 otherwise out of order and prone to
 its old lusts.

Lastly,

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Lastly, How the providences of Part IV.
God have carried towards me Chap. 6.
thence; what mercies received,
what afflictions sent upon me, and
what hath been my carriage answer-
ably. These heads of examination
if I cannot remember, I must here
turn to, and put the question to my
self as to every point particularly.
And whatever I find more remark-
able, let it be registred in mine
Accomptal (so I call that Paper-
book in which I use to keep ac-
count of my life and spiritual state)
whereof, as is abovesaid, I shall find
singular advantage in my succeeding
time.

Sect. 4.

*Of the Endeavour of godly sorrow. How
to work our selves to it.*

SIN is not such a thing, the know-
ledge of which is desirable for it
self, but onely in order to somewhat
else, which it is apt to beget, to wit,

M 4

Godly

Part. IV. *Godly sorrow and repentance,* My
 Chap. 6. sins therefore being thus known, I
 am to set my self about the sorrow-
 ing for them, and repenting of
 them.

And to godly sorrow the readiest
 course will be, more fully to fix my
 thoughts upon the sins, of which
 in my examination of my self I have
 found my self guilty, to look upon
 them, so as that *mine eye may affect*
my heart, my attent consideration of
 them may move and grieve me, as it
 ought. To this purpose I am to
 consider particularly;

First, the foulness of my parricu-
 lar sins in themselves and in their
 own nature, how vile they make me,
 how unable I should be to look men
 in the face, if they knew all these un-
 worthy acts by me, which I do of my
 self, and God far better than my self:
 how vile therefore must they needs
 render me in his holy Eye.

See the
 whole
 Duty of
 Man, pag.
 71, 72,
 &c.

Secondly, The several Aggrava-
 tions which they admit; the chief
 of which, and those which are aptest
 to

to affect me, I may take to be those which follow. Part IV
Chap. 6

1. Against how great *light* and how clear *knowledge* of Gods will I have sinned. I knew such and such actions to be, sinful, when yet I ventured upon them.

2. Against how many *checks of conscience* I committed them. Did not my own heart at that very instant smite me, telling me of the wrath of God and eternal flames belonging to those who do such things;

3. Against how many *engagements and obligations* to the contrary have I sinned. 1. my own vows and covenant both in baptism and since. 2. Gods mercies and forbearance, which should have invited and lead me to repentance. 3. Gods judgements and heavy hand many times upon me, which should have taught me righteousness. 4. Had I no hindrances in the way, which I broke through? It may be Gods holy providence cast somewhat in, which

Part IV
Chap. 6.

which did a while retard my commission of the sin, and if I had not been desperately bent upon it, might have diverted me, and dashed the temptation. All these were engagements to the contrary, and have not I broke through many of them?

Was not I the tempter and Devil to my self in them? Did not I set my self on work, without Satans incitation of me thereto?

Nay, 5. Besides that I have committed them upon mine own motion, did I not commit them also upon *deliberation* and advice? This must argue either much unbelief, or a strange contempt of God and judgement.

6. Is this the first time of the commission of this or that sin, or is it not now by *frequent iteration* become *customary*, habitual, and almost a *second nature* to me? And It hereby more a child of wrath than I was born?

7. Whether or no have not many of my sins been *publickly dishonourable* to God, and scandalous to my Christian

Christian profession? Hath not mine Part IV
 example, if not mine enticements, Chap. 6
 drawn in others to the same sin, or
 driven others out of conceit with
 Religion? Wretched man that I am!
 that I should so hold [perhaps teach]
 the faith as to make infidels.

Lastly, Something of grievousness
 the *circumstances of time and place,*
&c. may add thereto, which ought
 not to be overlooked.

If the consideration of this the
 foulness and grievousness of my sins
 move not, or too lightly touch mine
 heart, let me in the third and last
 place seriously consider, what I have
 incurr'd and merited by my sins. Cer-
 tain it is, God is for them displea-
 sed with me: I am out of his favour,
 and when I look up to him, I can ex-
 pect nothing but his wrath and curse;
 wrath and all its bitter effects; upon
 my *body* in sickness, pains, and loath-
 some maladies; upon my soul in hor-
 ror of mind and inquietude and tor-
 ments of conscience; upon mine e-
 state in disappointments, losses, and
 ruins;

Part IV.
Chap. 6.

ruins; upon my *Relations*; in making them griefs and burdens to me; upon my *Name*, in infamy and reproaches; nay, upon my very *Prayers*, in having them become an abomination before God. In a word, Gods wrath and curse in all I have, and all I do, is the only portion my sins have made mine in this present world, and in that future and eternal world judgment without mercy, horror and the gnawing worm, and torment everlasting, so pure, so exquisite as not to admit of so much refreshment as what a drop of water would give to a scorched tongue. This is the wages due to my sins, and which, except God in great mercy divert it, will infallibly befall me: and divert it he will not, except upon my sincere and hearty repentance, the thing which I have in present consideration, and with all my soul must endeavour, as I tender everlasting bliss, and the escaping everlasting torments.

Through such heads as these should I trace my sins, especially those

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those of them, which are most gross: Par. IV.
Chap. 6.
and in my Meditations dwell so upon
those considerations, as may, if pos-
sible, move my sorrow, at least breed
an utter aversion of the sin, and a
loathing of my self for it: And if
it be so, that I cannot shed tears, and
really mourn over my sins, yet if I
can find in my self, a through dis-
pleasure with my self for sin, and an
hatred of it, together with an earnest
desire to be freed from the habit
and power of the sin, as well as from
the guilt of it, this I may conclude
to be a sorrow of mind, and ought
therefore to cherish in my soul.

Sect. 5.

*Of Repentance, which is the effect of
godly sorrow, its true nature and
way of practice.*

THe Apostle saith, *Godly sorrow* 2 Cor. 7.
10.
worketh repentance, which need
not to be repented of. Now that repen-
tance may seem to consist of two
things, Of a full purpose of heart to
forsake

Part. IV
Chap 6

forfake sin, which is a change of mind; and of hearty endeavours against it, which is a change of life.

First, I say, I may not think I have repented of my sin, till I have taken up a *full purpose* and resolution of mind against it for the future. As long as there is in me any intention of returning to it again, I am an impenitent wretch. Now such purpose and resolution the foregoing consideration of my sin is apt to beget: and therefore by laying such thoughts truly home unto mine heart, by employing my mind much on them, I ought to endeavour to work my self up to such resolution, and never to sit down contented, or think my self penitent till I am so wrought upon. I shall not much need to be minded, that during such endeavours I ought to intermix with my meditations, frequent petitions to Almighty God, whose Grace onely it is, which is sufficient for me for the turning of my heart from sin.

Now

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Now purposes and resolutions are Part. IV.
Chap. 6. rotten, except endeavours to fulfill them follow. This therefore is the second part of repentance, that, as I have resolved, so I endeavour against sin.

And this endeavour against sin seems to have two parts, the one of which may best be acted in my Closet, the other must be acted any where and every where.

The first part of the endeavour against sin is, to do what we can to mortifie the habit, that is, the inclination, readiness, and customary proneness, which we have to the sin, which is to be forsaken. And that must be done.

By considering with my self what means, or remedies, I can find out against that sin. Certain it is, the more I can restrain or keep back my self from the actual commission or doing of any sin, the more will the power of that sin decay in me, the less inclined shall I be thereto. Wherefore if I cannot at the first root

Part. IV root out the habit, or overcome
 Chap 6 that miserable inclinedness, which
 I find thereto, yet let me endeavour
 to find out such means, which may
 keep me from the acting the sin, and,
 I say, that customary proneness unto
 the sin will by the grace of God de-
 cay.

Now in general it will be a true
 and proper *Remedy* against any sin
 to consider the occasions or induce-
 ments, which chiefly lead me there-
 unto, and to provide as well as I can
 against them.

Whether or no is it a sin which is
 deeply rooted in my nature and
 constitution? or whether or no is it
 such an one, which by my way of li-
 ving, converse and custome, I have
 settled in my self? If it be of the
 latter sort, the breaking my self of
 that custom, the altering, as far as is
 possible, such converse as hath
 brought me into it, is a very good
 remedy aginst it. But if it be a
 sin innate, and after a sort planted in
 my very make and complexion, it is
 more

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more difficult to subdue : But the Part IV.
Chap. 6.
way will be, (1.) To take such
course with my self, as that for the
future I may keep my self from the
acting of it as much as may be ;
that is, first, to abstain from and pro-
vide against all such occasions which
have or may blow up the flame of
my inbred lusts. And then, (2.)
If *fasting*, *watching*, or any such
usage of my body will abate the
strength of that particular lust, to
practise it diligently : And further,
(3.) To make it a constant petition
in my daily prayers to God, that he
by that Spirit, by which he is able
to subdue all things unto himself,
would mortifie in me the affection
and lust, which I have after that sin.
And by persevering in such course,
no doubt but at length, through the
divine Grace, I shall overcome it.
These *means* therefore having *con-*
sulted of (attending to my particu-
lar sin), the next step which I am to
take in the mortifying of it is :

2. To *resolve* there before God,
diligently

Part IV *diligently to use those means*, which
 Chap. 6. I have particularly consulted of, and
 so forthwith to order and contrive all
my affairs (as far as in me lies) that
 I may without any partiality use them
 all, according to the best of my skill,
 and in the most effectual manner that I
 know.

The second part of the *endeavour*
 against sin (which will not be so much
 the work of my Closet, as of my life)
 is *diligence in the using of these means*
 (which I have thus considered of,
 found out and resolved upon) where-
 ever I am, and whensoever I have
 opportunity.

Now that I may so do, it will very
 much help, if I write down these re-
 solutions before God in my priva-
 cy, which I am to do in mine *Ac-
 complish*; where also I am to record
 every dayes fasting, and the issue
 thereof, what I found new in mine
 estate, what I resolved on, what
 means I considered of against such
 and such sins. We find, they not
 onely made a *Covenant*, but put it in
writing,

Private Devotion. 259

writing, and sealed it before the Lord. Part. IV.
in their solemn Fast, *Nehem. 9. 38.* Chap. 6.

This will be one way to secure me against being slighty in my Penitentials: and it may besides much both confirm and quicken me in my execution of these my resolves, to read them over written by mine own hand before God in private.

And being thus registred, it will be good for me to be often (when I come into my Closet about my devotions and examine my self) looking on and reading them over, least forgetfulness should betray me into the breach of them.

Sect. 6.

An exemplification of the former Rules in two sins.

NOW to the end that this most necessary practise may be as plain as possible, it may haply conduce to set down some particular examples, in which those general rules

Part IV. rules may appear practised. And
 Chap. 6. forasmuch as it was before said, that
 all sins, of which we shall find our
 selves frequently guilty, are either
 such which are rooted in our parti-
 cular complexion (and so may especi-
 ally be called, *our iniquities*) or such
 which by some outward occasion (as
 converse or manner of living) we
 fall into, one instance shall be of such
 a sin, which is commonly too too
 much rooted in mens natures or par-
 ticular *Crases*, to wit, *Uncleanness*;
 the other in such an one, which
 though haply a man may be natural-
 ly inclined to, yet commonly may be
 more truly referred to the head of
 contracted than of in-born evils, and
 that is, *Triffling away our time*.

First then, suppose that upon exa-
 mination of my self, one sin, whereof
 I find my self guilty, is *Uncleanness*;
 and this I find diversly to have run
 through a great part of my life.
 Touching this, certain it is, that I re-
 pent not of it as I should, if I set not
 my self to root it out. Wherefore,
 accord-

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according to the rules laid down, I Part IV.
thus proceed. Chap. 6.

Being come now so far in my de- See Sect:
votions upon my Fast day as to Me- 4.
ditation, and having in my Meditati-
ons chiefly employed my thoughts
upon my self, whereby I have found
my self guilty of this sin, I set upon
the repenting of it. To that pur-
pose I endeavour to sorrow for it.
I therefore consider, *first*, how grie-
vous a sin that is in it self. And in
this case it may be, that good practi-
cal book which I have chosen to my
self to read and study, may much
help me, and discover to me the
grievousness of it in its own nature:
This being done, I consider how
grievous my commission of it is:
what particular aggravations all my
actions of this kind admit. Here I
open this my book, and examine it
by those aggravating particulars
mentioned: Further, I consider the
evil it hath brought, and may bring
upon me; wrath here, and wrath to
come. All which cordially employ- Sect. 4.
ing

Part. IV ing my thoughts upon, I endeavour
 Chap. 6. to affect my soul therewith, and to
 work in my self a loathing of such
 courses: This sorrow will work re-
 pentance, to wit, First a resolution
 against what I loath, and then an en-
 deavour against it, as well by consult-
 ing remedies and means against it,
 as by putting my self into a way of u-
 sing such means, of which particular
 rules have been just now given. And
 the result of my Humiliation thus far,
 I, as briefly as I can, register in mine
 Accomptal, in some such sort as
 this.

A^o Di — Januar. — Fasted: I
 found my self guilty of Uncleanness.
 This I considered to be in it self a very
 grievous sin.

1. It defiles my very body; makes
 me loathsome.

2. It debaseth and dulls my soul.

3. It is that which nature it self is
 ashamed of.

4. God most perfectly hates it, and
 therefore when he expresseth the vilest
 sins,

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sins, calls them Whoredom. Eze. 16. 15. Part IV.

5. It is one of those sins which God Chap. 6.
seldom suffers to escape unpunished here.

6. I shall never be able to like my self, or have any inward content in my self while I practice it.

7. Perseverance in it will undoubtedly destroy my body and health as well as soul.

[Each of these, and more than these, as God shall be pleased to assist me in my Meditations I am supposed to have attently considered.]

My particular commissions in this case have the following aggravations. They have been done.

1. Knowingly. 2. [as I find it with See Sect. 4.
my self, possibly against checks of con-
science.] 3. Against my vow of bap-
tism expressly, &c. 4. Spontaneously.
5. Deliberately in such and such cases.
6. Frequently, and thus long, &c.

Whereupon, most humbly begging pardon of God, I resolved with all my might to endeavour against it. To that purpose I considered of those means against it.

1. Spare

Part. IV.

Chap. 6.

1. Spare diet : frequent fasting :
 avoiding high meats.

2. Spare sleeping : not lying down
 till sleep compel me, rising early, or at
 least as soon as sleep leaves me.

3. Hard usage of my body : lying
 hard, using prostrations, or tiring po-
 stures in my prayers, &c.

4. Praying often, and much conver-
 sing with God in holy duties, which
 will make me ashamed of such carnal
 delights and sordid enjoyments.

5. Avoiding light company, light
 discourse, gesture, looks, &c.

6. Considering death, and that in
 its pomp and terribleness : looking much
 on Sceletons, dead mens skulls, bones,
 or contemplating consumptive and gast-
 ly visages.

7. Not venturing my self on any op-
 portunities or temptation to it.

These I then resolved to practice, and
 will therefore frequently read over. A-
 men. Lord, thy grace!

But it may be, this is not my sin :
 however, it will teach me how to
 deal

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deal in humbling my self for that Part IV.
which is. Suppose then I find my Chap. 6.
self guilty of *trifling away my time.*
There is no repenting hereof without amendment : But what course may I take to be truly penitent for it ?

The answer is : I must proceed as before. *Meditating, Resolving, Consulting,* and by all means *Confirming* my self against it. And the result of what I am to register in my account, may be thus.

[Such a day fasted] I found my self guilty of *trifling away my time.* I considered the grievousness thereof.

1. This is truly idleness, what name soever else I give it For idleness is not the doing nothing, but the not doing what I should when I should. Now idleness is undoubtedly a grievous sin, as having not only its own guilt in it, but the guilt of many more sins, which it occasioneth.

2. This is the frustrating the end of my being, as far as in me lies, a liv-

N

ing

Part IV. ing to no purpose : and that how un-
 Chap. 6. worthy is it of a reasonable crea-
 ~~~~~ ture!

3. I must needs be unprepared for Heaven, and my great accounts, while guilty hereof. Every hour stands on record in Gods omniscience : and I cannot it may be give account of three hours in a day.

4. How evidently do I ruine my self, not only as to the future, but as to this present world hereby. What might I do, and be, were I careful of my time !

Further for me to do this how grievous is it ?

1. I know it to be sinful. 2. When I have remembred my duties to be undone, I have yet neglected them, against the present warnings of my conscience. 3. How many wayes have I been engaged against this. So much, so worthy a work to do, and so much of my time already spent, &c. [Easie it is hereby to see how I may proceed according to my particular state.]

These

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These Meditations being finished, Part IV and, as briefly as I can, entred, it Chap. 6. remains that I enter my resolution of endeavour against this sin as before: and then study meet remedies thereto. Now this sin not being alwayes *natural* to them in whom it is found, but *adventitious*, it concerns me to consider, as before admonished, how I came to be guilty hereof, and to suit my remedies to those occasions.

1. It may be I *am busied about many things*, and so either neglect all, (or what chiefly concerns me) my proper duties. Perhaps I cannot endure that which should be my business, but am fickle, desultory, and rambling in mine employment, and though I am not much guilty of doing nothing, yet do I not do what I should: and this is undoubtedly a piece of idleness, as above-said, for a man to neglect the business of the season and of his calling, and to be most taken up in things which least concern him. Now here

Part IV.  
Chap. 6.

the remedy will be to consider what it is that is my proper business: to put my work into a certain mould and order: and then to set my self a task daily, and engage my self (as well as I can) to so much of it, before I divert to any Eccentrical occupation, I mean to the busying my self in things, which do not properly concern me.

2. It may be I use to sit and talk away my time with friends and company: much goes in idle visits: I have a nature, which is too sociable, and when I meet with company to my mind, I know not how to deny my self of their society and discourse: and if I do not meet with such, I am apt to leave my business and go seek such. Here the remedy will be (partly the same with the former) prudently to proportion my time to my business: So much of my business have I resolved to do: that resolution must not be broken: so much time will that work take me up: so much, my devo-

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devotions: wherefore I have but so Part IV.  
much left for society; more there- Chap. 6.  
fore I must not take. If therefore I  
am litted into any acceptable com-  
pany, it will become me often to  
consider, how goes the time? so  
much of my imposed task yet lies  
undone, &c.

3. It may be much of my time is  
spent in dulness, sitting still, &c. It  
may be my constitution is such that  
if I eat heartily, I am a great while  
unfit for my work, and so feeding  
freely layes upon me a kind of neces-  
sity of being idle. Here the remedy  
will be to resolve upon a sparer diet,  
to bridle mine appetite and eat less  
when I do eat; or if I cannot that,  
to eat seldomer, and to be at least  
but once a day unfit for my work:  
which time of unfitness, if I will well  
husband my time, I may best allow  
for society; it will be fit enough for  
that.

4. It may be vexations, anger, or  
giving way to passion many times  
indisposeth me for business. Here



Part IV. the remedy will be to watch ag<sup>st</sup> inst  
 Chap. 6. such disturbances, to endeavour  
 meekness, patience, and the mortification of unruly affections.

5. It may be solicitude about this world, thoughtfulness, cares take up many of mine hours : and then, mine head being full, I cannot call home my mind and fall to work : and when by my care I cannot find any expedient for what I sought, this breeds discontent, envy of other mens ease, happiness, freedom, &c. And seriously it is a great deal of time, which narrow fortunes thus steal away from some men. Here the remedy will be, study of content, frugality, wise husbanding mine estate, proportioning mine expences to my revenues. And so whatever I find to be the occasion of my loss or expence of time, let me study a suitable remedy thereto, and register as well the occasion as its corresponding remedy. Let me then proceed to resolve upon the use of such remedies, and to order my particular

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cular affairs in such sort that I may <sup>Part IV.</sup> use them with the best advantage : <sup>Chap. 6.</sup> and such resolutions let me alwayes enter upon my *Accomptal*, for the fastning them both upon mine heart and memory.

### Sect. 7.

*A further consideration of Repentance with reference to some particular sins.*

**R**epentance may seem to have been considered hitherto with a Relation to *habituall sins*, that is, such sins which either by nature or custom are rooted in the heart, and have begot in the soule a readines, and inclinedness unto them. But surely, if I thoroughly understand the Practice of it, as it hath been hitherto described, I cannot be at a loss in what sort it ought to be exercised, when I find my self guilty of one *particular fall or sin*, the habit, or customary readines to which, I

N. 4.                      have.

Part IV. have not yet contracted : for the  
 Chap. 6. substance of my work is still the  
 same, viz.

Having in mine examination of my self found my self guilty, I am by attent consideration of that sin, whereof I am guilty, both in it self, and as it is mine, to endeavour to affect my heart therewith, so that I may truly sorrow for it : and though, it may be, I may truly conclude, that it hath not yet got fully a rooting within me, yet for as much as the first or second commission thereof hath in probability made me more inclined and easie thereto, than I was, when my mind, having been never much bent this way, was thitherwards more inflexible, therefore ought I to study and consult how for the future to secure and confirm my soul against any relapses or second backslidings : and after such consultation to resolve and engage my self with all possible strength against it.

One thing more, in case of sins

CORR-

## Private Devotion. 273

committed, or wrong done unto my neighbour, is yet requisite to the making my repentance sincere and through; and that is, that I forthwith upon sight of the sin, if possible, make *restitution* : otherwise that I make it as soon as I am able; and in case I am not likely to be able to make it, that I endeavour by acknowledgement of mine offence to seek for reconciliation unto him, whom I have so wronged. The necessity hereof may be concluded

Part. IV.  
Chap. 6.

1. from what hath been above said, that repentance cannot be true, except there be an amendment. Now most evident it is, that while I suffer the wrong done yet to remain or continue, I am still injurious; and so consequently there is no amendment, and therefore no repentance. And, 2. the words of our Saviour most expressly enforce it. *If thou bring thy gift to the Altar, and there remember that thy brother hath ought against thee, Leave there thy gift and first go and be reconciled to thy brother,*

Mat. 5.

22, 23.

N 5

ther,

Part IV. *ther, then come and offer thy gift,*  
 Chap. 6. God will accept of no sacrifice or

duty whatsoever, at my hands in such a case, till I have reconciled my self, if possible. If any think this not to amount to restitution, 3. let him read *Levit. 6. 2,3,4,5,6.* and *Numb. 5. 6,7,8,* where he shall find, besides the sin-offering to be brought to God in case of wrong done to others, it was enjoined, that the principal should be restored, with an addition of one fift part thereto. Now if so it be, that I cannot find those nor the relations (as Children, Widows, Heirs) of those to whom I have been injurious, that I may make restitution, let me give and devote so much to the poor, as would do it. this is to restore unto God when I cannot to my brother :: let me never lay up any thing wrongfully gotten, or that wherewith recompence should be made for wrong done, it will eat as doth a Canker. Besides I cannot, if by wrong I increase my store, ever have a quiet  
 con-

## Private Devotion. 275

conscience, or reasonably expect the pardon of that my sin. Part. IV.  
Chap. 6.

Now the consideration how this *Restitution* or reconciliation may be made, and the resolution to make it, may be best done in my Closet: and such consultation and resolution deserves a place to be *registered* amongst my other penitential Devotions, upon the same reasons as they do.

These rules in my repentance if I have observed, though I cannot look upon any action of mine as compleat, yet I may have hope I have not herein been slighty, but that God through Christ Jesus will accept it.

Sect.

*Of that faith which is requisite in order to pardon of sin.*

See Dr.  
Ham,  
Pract.  
Catech.  
Lib. 1.  
Sect. 3.

**B**ESIDES *Repentance*; it is commonly said that God requireth *Faith* of us in order to the pardon of our sins, and it is most certain, if we understand *Faith* as we ought; But it is as certain, that people are ordinarily very much mistaken in the nature of *Faith*; as it is not unusual for us to be in such things, the names whereof are taken in such different senses as the name of *Faith* is in Scripture.

Now *Faith*, we all of us know signifies *Belief*: and therein doth the nature of it lye. Him that we believe in is God: that which we believe is his Word. So then, *Faith* is a full belief or credence of the whole Word of God, and especially of the Gospel; a receiving it, and every part of it, in a way suitable to the



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the matter of it; agreeing to what-  
 ever is therein affirmed, as being  
 true; believing all the promises,  
 that God will never fail on his part,  
 unless we do on ours; setting our  
 selves to fulfil all the commands, as  
 believing all that is commanded to  
 be our duty and of indispensable ne-  
 cessity to salvation; being affected  
 with an holy care and fear; upon  
 consideration of all the threat-  
 nings, as being perswaded God  
 will be as good as his word, and  
 punish all impenitent sinners. Faith,  
 I say, is the hearty and sincere em-  
 bracing and being perswaded of  
 the whole word and these its parts  
 and the being affected accordingly:  
 and we must not single out the *pro-  
 mises* and believe them alone; for  
 all *commands* and *threats* are no less  
 the word of God than are the pro-  
 mises, and therefore must be as much  
 believed, nor shall any one ever  
 be justified who doth not thus be-  
 lieve.

If it be asked, whether it be not  
*faith.*

# 278 A Method for

Part. IV. *faith* in the *free promises* of the  
 Chap. 6. Gospel, or a trusting to God  
 through Christ, that he will pardon  
 my sin, which doth chiefly *justifie*  
 me, I say, No: and that the embra-  
 cing the doctrine of the Gospel, the  
 receiving every command and threat  
 so deeply into my heart, as that the  
 belief of the one turns forthwith  
 into obedience, and of the other  
 into an holy fear, (which are the  
 other parts of faith) cannot be con-  
 ceived to be either in their own  
 nature inferiour unto that trust, or  
 less either valued or required by  
 God, I do not say that God accepts  
 of any of them, or all of them, for  
 their worth: (He accepts of them,  
 and of the person, in whom they  
 are purely through Christ; through  
 his merits doth he impute this faith  
 to such person for righteousness,  
 that is, reckon and accept of this his  
 cordial and impartial receiving his  
 whole Gospel after this sort, as well  
 as if he had performed perfect and  
 unfinning obedience, as he was  
 first

first bound : ) but this I say (and that upon the evidence already hindered) that justification, or the pardoning of sin, is no more appropriated to that one act of faith, which we call trust, than to those other ; and that I cannot (if comparison in this case be made) but account those other acts (that impartial submitting and devoting the soul to obedience answerable to every command, that true resting in the fear of God) as the more principal, worthy, and I am sure, less to be suspected acts of faith : At the least I cannot conceive, what we call a justifying faith to proceed any otherwise than as follows.

First, I do believe the promise of pardon of sin to be true ; and God to be faithful, and that without all doubt God will not fail on his part, except I fail on mine. God will not fail to give the promised blessing, if I fail not to perform the condition, upon which he hath promised it.

Secondly, I therefore forthwith set my self about the condition, or duty

# 280 A Method for

Part. IV. duty required, as I expect the blessing or promised mercy from God :  
Chap. 6.

I sorrow for my sins ; I endeavour amendment of life ; I cleave unto God with full purpose of impartial obedience.

Thirdly, having done so, I do not believe that all this is worth any thing in it self, but that it is through the meer grace of God in Christ Jesus, that I must be accepted, pardoned, and saved. Wherefore I trust to God according to his promise (the condition of which I have endeavoured to fulfil) that he will through Christ pardon all my sins, and reckon this my faith to me for righteousness. To trust for the pardoning of my sins upon any other terms is unbelief and presumption : for it is a believing God will pardon my sins upon other terms, than he hath said he would ever pardon sin, and that is a believing God will be false.

But now let the case be put, that some grievous sinner, much humbled

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bled under the sense of his notorious wickedness, doth, as before-  
said, believe the promise to be true as it is, set himself about the fulfilling its condition (sorrowing repenting, &c.) believe all that he doth to be in its self worth nothing, but yet Christs merits to be of infinite worth, through which notwithstanding he dare not trust for the pardon of his sins, as remembering them to be so great, and doubting lest he hath not yet performed the condition, which the promise of the pardon of sin through Christs merits requires, and in this temper dies; Put, I say, this case, shall we think this man hath not a true and justifying faith? He hath surely; and it may be a truer faith, than hath many an one who hath yet more of the trust. But yet it is evident he hath not this trust: for he durst not, through sense of his own unworthiness animate himself thereto. Seeing therefore, that it is very possible a man may in such case be justified

Part. IV.  
Chap. 6.

Part IV. justified without that act of faith, I  
 Chap. 6. conclude that justification is not  
 appropriate unto it, that is, that a  
 trusting in God that he through  
 Christ will pardon my sin, is not  
 that act of faith which chiefly justifies  
 me, and that they are very much  
 mistaken, who take this (by it self)  
 to be the true nature of justifying  
 faith, that they believe God will  
 pardon their sin for Christs sake.  
 So then, I now see the course which  
 I am to take, in my *humiliation*, to  
 sue out the pardon of my sin : I am  
 to *believe*, that God will not fail on  
 his part, if I do not fail on mine : I  
 am therefore to *repent* of my sins,  
 as before I have been taught, and  
*persist in amendment of life*, all the  
 while *trusting* in the grace of God  
 through Christ, according to the  
 promise of the Gospel, that I doing  
 thus, my sins shall not be laid to my  
 charge as being taken away by the  
 cross of Christ, in whose merits I  
 have, through this my faith and the  
 mercy of God to me, a share.

Sect.

Sect. 9.

*Of Prayer upon such Fasting-dayes.*

**T**hat which will much heighten my affection in this my repentance, and further compleat all its parts yet remains, to wit prayer; which, as it must on this occasion and day be more large and particular than ordinary, so I cannot now want matter for it, after such consideration of my condition, and of the way how I am to seek for pardon of sin as is supposed (if the former rules have been observed) to have foregone. Particularly, I am to frame my prayers, or at least to alter them, as neer as I can, to my condition.

1. Confessing my several sins, and that not without those aggravating circumstances, in which I formerly considered them.

2. Representing before God my sorrow, my resolution of heart against them.

3. Beg-



Part IV.  
Chap. 6.

3. Begging his grace, to assist me in the fulfilling my godly purposes and pardon for all my sins, whether known and confessed, or as yet unknown to me.

To these heads my Christian discretion may add more according to my particular condition. To wit if any judgment rest on me or mine, or is feared by reason of these my sins, I may implore deliverance from it : If any mercy is expected, or by me aimed at, which I fear my sins may most justly hinder or blast, I may importune God for the granting it; or otherwise apply my self as occasion serves.

Now as to the form or outward manner of my prayer; If I am able to pray otherwise, I shall not haply on these occasions see it alwayes fit or convenient to use set or composed forms : for that there may be many particular affecting circumstances of my sins, which no form will expresse so plainly, as I have need to expresse them for the moving my

## Private Devotion. 285

my sorrow. If therefore I find my heart ready and so composed, that

Part IV.

Chap. 6.

I dare venture upon what we call a *conceived* prayer, which being of mine own invention, by the assistance of the Spirit, may more perfectly suit with my condition in all, than one framed by another to my hand, having either noted in a paper before me the substance or matter of my *Confessions, Petitions, and Thanksgiving*, (which Paper for memories sake, I lay before me when I kneel down to prayer) or else so considered of, as that it will be ready, I may spend a few thoughts touching the particular expressions; by which I intend to represent this my mind to God, To this purpose these two practices may be helpful.

1. To read any part of the word of God, which (being I daily read some of it) I may know to be suitable to my present case. If I find mine heart hard, let me read some affecting

Part. IV. ing working place. (Such I may be  
 Chap. 6. presumed to have noted as I have  
 read in my course.) If I find it tender,  
 let me read such place or places, as  
 may nourish this tenderness, or  
 raise me to an higher pitch of zeal  
 and ardency in these duties which  
 I perform to him. And in like man-  
 ner, in other cases.

2. To recall and consider such fit  
 expressions of the particular mat-  
 ters which I am to set forth before  
 God, as I may be presumed to have  
 observed and treasured up in my me-  
 mory or book, in my ordinary  
 course of reading.

After such premeditation, with an  
 holy fear, I am to endeavour to  
 pour out my inward conceptions be-  
 fore God, as fitly and as fervently  
 as I can. But I must not think that  
*fervency* lies in *loud speaking*, but in  
 the inward affection of the soul:  
 notwithstanding if my closet be so  
 situate, that I may judge I cannot be  
 heard without, I may many times  
 find, that it will conduce, if not to  
 the

## Private Devotion. 287

the affecting me more; yet to the keeping my mind more close to my business, for me to speak in a voice exceeding a private whisper. Part IV.  
Chap. 6.

But let me be never so able a person, and my heart never so fixt, to use a form so far, as where occasion shall serve to leave it a while, (to wit where I would confess or ask more particularly) may keep my prayers from being loose, imperfect, broken and disorderly, and consequently make my devotions riper. Now such an one is this which follows.

**O** Thou Great, Holy, and Fearful God, unto whom all things are naked and open; and before whom, as being of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, nothing that is unrighteous shall stand. I even blush and dread to appear before thee: for in me there is nothing but iniquity that thou canst

General  
Confession  
of grievous guilt

Part. IV.  
Chap. 6.

canst behold. Iniquity indeed is too clean a word: I am nothing but filth. I have sinned against Heaven and before thee; and am so far unworthy of being called thy son, that I am not fit to be called thy servant: but deserve rather as a Rebel, as a faithless and treacherous wretch against thy Majesty, to be destroyed of the Destroyer, to have all thy wrath and plagues to meet in me, and to be made unto the world an example of thy severity and revenging justice, that by men might learn no more to presume and back slide.

Allegati-  
on of pro-  
mises; to  
affect or  
melt the  
heart  
more  
kinilly.

But there is mercy with thee,  
O Lord, that thou maystest be  
feared and sought unto: Nor  
hast thou, as thou hast protes-  
ted, any pleasure in the death of  
fin-

# Private Devotion. 299

sinners; but art so desirous, that they might return and be healed, that thou hast not spared thy very onely begotten Son, but hast given him to seek, and, by death it self, to save the lost sons of men; promising, that of all those, who through him come home unto thee, thou wilt by no means cast off any. I come, O Lord, at least I have here set my self in the way to come, and bewail my departures. And let not my Lord be angry, and I will confess.

I have, O God, a most corrupt nature and heart, full of impurities and abominable things, as a cage of unclean birds. She was innocent in comparison of me, out of whom came but seven devils: I may  
 O most

Part IV.  
 Chap. 6.

Particular  
 confession  
 of habitu-  
 al sins.

**Part IV.** *most truly stile my self Le-  
gion: such swarms  
wherefoever in this  
prayer the mark †  
is found, the Reader  
must not forget to  
consider particular-  
ly touching those  
expressions whether  
they fit his condi-  
tion.*

*gion: such swarms  
of lusts do possess  
me! The lusts of  
the flesh († Intem-  
perance, Idleness,  
Uncleannes) the lusts  
of the eyes († Co-  
vetousness, Envy)  
the Pride of life (†  
conceitedness of my self, Am-  
bition and proud Wrath) are  
things familiar to me, rooted  
and grounded in my heart:  
And that truly Lord, not so  
much by nature as by conti-  
nued custom and wicked pra-  
ctice. I have my self made my  
soul more depraved, than I ever  
received it from corrupt na-  
ture. That I am dull and  
heartless in the performance of  
all holy duties; that I am vigo-  
rous*



## Private Devotion. 291

rous and active in the serving <sup>Part. 3<sup>rd</sup></sup>  
my lusts and pleasures, and the <sup>Chap. 6</sup>  
fulfilling the desires of my flesh  
and mind; that I am vain, heed-  
less, and commonly void of thy  
fear in all my ways, I owe very  
much unto my own vicious  
conversation; unto my giving  
myself up to walk in my own  
wayes; unto my choosing vani-  
ty, and addicting my self there-  
to; unto my either total neg-  
lect or slighty discharge of thy  
worship. Impossible in a manner  
it is, that any one who lives as  
I have done, should have a bet-  
ter heart, than I have.

And at this rate, O Lord, <sup>Of Adam</sup>  
have I ever lived. My child- <sup>al sin.</sup>  
hood, the innocent part of <sup>In Child-</sup>  
my life, was a state of necessa- <sup>hood.</sup>  
ry ignorance of thee: yet even  
O 2                    herein

Part IV.  
Clap. 6.

Youth

Ripe age.

herein how soon did the accursed fruits of inborn lusts begin to shew themselves! My youth, what was it, but a vain and brutish, a mad and sensual age! As to that smal notice, which therein I had of thy will and nature, how little credit did I give unto it, and how ineffectual was it upon me, either to the quickening me to my duty, or restraining me from any wickedness! But as to my riper years, O Lord, I know not what to say: I should in truth sit down astonished before thee, but that I want a due sence of my sinfulness. Mine iniquities are gone over my head: That they are greater than I can bear, is little; they are greater than I can comprehend or number. Nay if I should let pass my  
sins

## Private Devotion. 303

sins of ignorance, of infirmity, <sup>Part IV</sup>  
of heedlessness and inadvertency, <sup>Chap. 6</sup>

(by which notwithstanding I seriously acknowledge my self, times without number, to have dishonoured and provoked thee: ) If I should insist only upon my knowing, presumptuous and wilful sins, even these, O Lord, it were impossible for me to reckon up. For besides that vast number of them, which I cannot call to mind (all which notwithstanding are upon record before thee ) what a black and tedious Catalogue of them have I here open ( or, which I can spread ) before thee ! How many wilful neglects, yea even contempts, of my duty ! How many resolute perpetrations of horrid crimes ; such which I

O 3

now.

\* If need \* now am ashamed even to  
 require think of, yet did not then  
 now may blush to commit; sins, the  
 in his, and heinousness whereof being con-  
 sidered, If I could do no-  
 such o- thing else but mourn over them  
 ther pla- all my dayes, though I should  
 ces be ex- weep, as my Saviour sweat, in  
 changed with of- bloud, under unknown anguish  
 ten or sometimes and agonies, I could not but  
 account my self impenitent.  
 Nay, had I only that one sin  
 of [ \* \* ] so often by me re-  
 peated to bewail, what sorrow  
 could suffice for its  
 due lamentation!

*Here are to be  
 mentioned thy chiefest  
 and most frequent  
 sin or sins.*

But if I add here-  
 unto my [ \* \* ] my  
 [ \* \* ] &c. what rea-  
 son have I, were my fasts, con-  
 fessions, prayers and tears a  
 thousand fold to what they are  
 or can be, to sit down and la-  
 ment

## Private Devotion. 295

ment my notorious impiety- Part IV.  
Chap. 6.  
tence!

And besides this weight of Actual  
sins aggra-  
vated.  
guilt, which the heinous nature of my sins themselves load me with, what a sad additional pressure do their dismal aggravations bring? What circumstance almost can there be that makes sin grievous which I may not find in most of mine? It is but an ordinary aggravation of my sins, that they have been committed against knowledge, that I have held thy truth in unrighteousness, and being convinced of my duty, have both neglected it, and done contrary unto it.

† The very instant dictates of Against  
Conscience.  
conscience, protesting against the sins which I have been about to commit; the smitings

O 4. of

Part IV. of mine own heart, not onely  
 Chap. 6. after and before, but amidst the  
 very commision of them, have  
 not restrained my head-strong  
 will.

Against  
 the stri-  
 vings of  
 the Spi-  
 rit.

† Nay O Lord, hath not the  
 voice of thy Spirit joyned with  
 the voice of my Conscience,  
 and the united perswasions of  
 both striven with me, but  
 all in vain? † Have I not known  
 that if I would resist, through  
 thy grace I should overcome?  
 And might I not through the  
 same grace, have resisted if I  
 would? † Have not I at the ve-  
 ry same time thought of thy  
 wrath and eternal flames be-  
 longing to those who do such  
 things? and yet this in vain too.

Against  
 Vows.

¶ And besides the vow of my  
 Baptisme, which I have owned  
 and acknowledged my self to  
 stand

# Private Devotion. 307

stand bound by, Ah! Lord, have I not made many a particular vow against those very sins, which after, as a Dog to his vomit, I have returned to; And † those vows brought to thy Table, and sealed in the Bloud of thy Son; I Have not I tasted thy mercies encouraging mine obedience, and on the contrary, sometimes wrung out almost the dregs of thy wrath in punishment of my backslidings.

Part. IV  
Chap. 6.

At the  
Lords  
Table.

Against  
mercies  
and  
Judgments.

I Further, hast not thou many a time hindred me in my prosecution of these sins, and by some interposing providence, dulled the temptation, which I lay under towards them; † When yet I have proved so far a Devil to my self, as to retrieve the temptation, and o-

Against  
hindrances.



Part IV.  
Chap. 6.

ver-bearing the voice of my  
conscience, the resistance of thy  
Spirit, breaking through all  
engagements to obedience,  
which either thou or my self  
have laid upon me, yea, and  
the very hindrances and lets,  
which have been put in my way  
against those sins, I have re-  
turned to the attempts and  
practices of them. Ah Lord!  
What can such a sinner be fit  
for, but destruction? And yet  
after this sort, how long have  
I lived sinning! And how have I  
hardened my heart against all  
those means, which thou hast  
used for my betterment! Be-  
sides, How many of these my  
sins have been committed o-  
penly and in the sight of the  
Sun, to the dishonour of thee,  
and to the scandal of others,  
who

Continu-  
ance in  
sin.

Openness  
of sin.

## Private Devotion. 299

who beholding my practices, Part IV. Chap. 6.  
have blasphemed, at least been,  
provoked to blaspheme, and  
speak evil of Christianity!

All this, O Lord, is but my Confessi-  
old wickedness: I have later on of la-  
[and † therefore if possible, some ter sins.  
of them more grievous] sins  
to confess unto thee. It is but  
[such or such a time or day!  
that I [\* \*] Ah

how can I lift up my Here mention la-  
face, or look to- ter falls.

wards thee my so oft offen- Confessi-  
ded God! ¶ And yet, notwith- on of my  
standing all this, I have other  
not yet done O Lord. For mens sins.  
besides these sins of mine own,  
what a multitude of the sins  
of other men do I stand acces-  
sary unto and guilty of! How  
many, for ought I know have  
I undone by my example!

What

Part IV.  
Chap. 6.

What a multitude is there, for whose profaneness and unbelief (being occasioned by the scandal against Religion, which my looseness hath possess't them with) I am to answer for! † Some there are, whom I have more directly and neerly corrupted. And how many more may they have corrupted, who haply had not been in that case corrupt themselves, had not I propagated such sins to them! Ah! wretched man that I am, who have not been so far innocent as to be wicked alone, and destroy no more than my self.

Confessi-  
on of im-  
penitence

And now, O Lord, after I have confessed thus much, notwithstanding all which I have confessed, and much more which I am not able to express, nor so

# Private Devotion. 311

so much as my self to know, what an hard, unbroken and stupid heart have I! The truth is, the multitude and grievousness of my sins is such, as is enough to make me impenitent and desperate upon the meer sight of them. † I may well doubt whether it be possible, that such a backsliding wretch as my self should ever be renewed again unto repentance, or thereby restored. ¶ But forasmuch as I understand, that to turn thus desperate, and to neglect repentance and amendment of life, would be worse than all the wickedness, which I have hitherto wrought, I am here prostrate before thee to bewail my self, and with sorrow and grief of heart for my former wayes do I here cast my self upon

Par. IV.  
Chap. 6.

Address  
of affi-  
ance, or  
casting  
the soul  
on God  
for mer-  
cy.

# 302 A Method for

Part. IV. upon thee. If thou wilt have  
 Chap. 6. mercy, thou canst still save me:

If thou wilt not, Lord, I perish.

But dost thou use to suffer  
 those to perish, who thus with  
 such repentance as they can,  
 submit and humble themselves  
 at thy footstool, crying unto  
 thee for help? Far it be it from  
 thee, thou Father of Mercies!

Notwithstanding, in as much as  
 I, being much worse than ordi-  
 nary sinners, do more justly  
 deserve to find no place for re-  
 pentance, and have therefore  
 more reason to fear how thou  
 maist deal with me, deal with

Resoluti-  
 on against  
 sin repre-  
 sented to  
 God.

me as thou wilt, † through thy  
 grace I will sin no more; no  
 more knowingly and presump-  
 tuously as I have done. And to  
 that end I have here in thy pre-  
 sence this day considered my

ways :

# Private Devotion. 303

wayes: † I have endeavoured  
 to find out those wiles and me-  
 thods, by which the Devil and  
 mine own lusts have ensnared  
 me in such grievous sins. † I  
 have resolved upon impartial  
 diligence as well in my endea-  
 vours against these particular  
 evils as against all other, and  
 in performing unto thee hearty  
 and intire obedience. These  
 Resolutions I here humbly pre-  
 sent before thee, sacredly en-  
 gaging my self to do my ut-  
 most to keep them, and be-  
 seeching thee by thy grace to  
 engage my heart more firmly  
 to them. And, Lord, let not  
 any dulness or want of that af-  
 fection, with which I ought  
 to have confessed my sins, to  
 have bewailed my guilt, and  
 to have passed these resolu-  
 tions

Part. IV.  
 Chap. 6.

Petition  
 For ac-  
 ceptance  
 of peni-  
 tence.

vd1

ons

.no

Part. IV  
Chap. 6

ons, hinder, that this my serious humiliation of my selfe should not be accepted before thee. Such contrition, as thou hast enabled me to, I have endeavoured, sorrowing that I am not more deeply humbled, Such, which is wanting, do thou bestow; For it is no less thy property to bestow than accept the contrite heart: The broken spirit is, O Lord, from thee. When thou of old commandedst water out of the flinty Rock, it forthwith yielded obedient streams: nor can my heart (dry and hard as it is) but dissolve into holy tears, if thou wilt bid it melt: Give forth then the word, O God; Speak, thy servant is here ready to hear. Turn thou me and I shall be turned. Send out thy

For more  
brokenness  
of heart.

For thorough  
and particular  
conversion.



## Private Devotion. 315

Part IV.  
Chap. 6.

thy good Spirit: let it enlighten the eyes of my mind, in the knowledge both of my self and thee: let it savingly perswade me of the truth of all that thou hast spoken, and especially, of the defiling, cursed, and damning nature of sin, of the sufficiency and efficacy of the merits of Christ Jesus unto all those, who by a right faith apply themselves to thee through him. (I do O Lord, believe, help my unbelief.) and grant that this sight and perswasion both of my sin and Saviour may affect mine heart, so that I may sorrow after a godly sort: and that sorrow may bring forth in me those wholesome fruits (which after all my endeavours of repentance I cannot but lament to be

Part IV. be much wanting in me, to wit)

Chap. 6. *carefulness against sin, vehement  
desire and zeal of holiness, indig-*

*nation and an holy revenge a-  
gainst my self; by all which I  
may for the future clear my self,  
and ever approve mine heart  
honest, upright and sincere be-*

For Per-  
severance.

*fore thee. ¶ Suffer not this my  
righteousness to be only, as a  
morning cloud or early dew,  
soon passing away, but let thy  
grace alwayes dwelling in me  
keep open in my soul an ever-  
flowing fountain of such peni-  
tence, that I may go on thus  
mourning to moun over my  
sins, and perfecting holiness in  
thy fear; accounting all little  
enough, if so be I may but in  
the end obtain mercy. And*

For Ju-  
stification

*this my penitent return (at least  
heartly endeavour of such re-  
turn)*

# Private Devotion. 307

turn) accompanied with persevering study of impartial obedience to thee; do thou, however most unworthy in it self, through the perfect merits of thy Son accept, washing away all my sins (both the iniquities of my youth and transgressions of my riper years, as well known as unknown) especially my (\*\*) in his blood; and reckoning, according to thy gracious Covenant, this my faith (which by such works as these shall discover it self to be alive and true) unto me for righteousness. And, if thy infinite Wisdom shall see it to be good for me; do thou grant me this further happiness, that I thus living in thy fear, may be ever filled

Pat. IV.  
Chap. 6.

*Here mention thy  
chiefest sin or  
sins.*

*For assurance.*

Part IV.  
Chap. 6.

filled with peace and joy,  
through a comfortable assurance  
of thy favour, and hopes of  
eternal glory.

For out-  
ward  
comforts

As to all my outward af-  
fairs, by thy good providence  
be thou pleased so to overrule  
all events, that whatsoever be-  
falls me may work together to  
me for good. My sins indeed,  
O Lord, deserve quite contra-  
ry; even the severest inflictions  
of thy wrath and fiery displea-  
sure. And I do most seriously  
acknowledg that in all the judg-  
ments, which thou hast at any  
time laid upon me, thou hast  
used much mercy. All the  
paines, which my body hath  
felt; all the losses, which have  
impaired my estate; all the in-  
juries, which have blasted my  
name

Confessi-  
on as to  
judg-  
ments.

# Private Devotion.

319

name (particularly \*\*) I embrace as infinitely less than my Part IV  
Chap. 6.

deserts. That † I am

in any straits [\*\*]

that I suffer otherwise

(in my body, relations,

&c. \*\*) were all a thousand

fold to what it is; I should confess

it to be most just. Were

I to enjoy no more good than

I do deserve, I should have

just nothing. Righteous there-

fore art thou, O Lord when I

plead with thee. Yet if thou

wilt be intreated by thy re-

penting servant, to † with-

draw (\* or withhold)

thy hand, to remove

the punishment I feel

(or not to inflict the pu-

nishments which I fear)

but through the blood

of Christ to deliver me

*Here mention a-  
ny particular af-  
flictions.*

*Depre-  
cation of  
them.*

*\* These and such  
like expressions  
are to be used ac-  
cording to persons  
particular condi-  
tions.*

from

Part. IV. from thy present wrath, as well  
 Chap. 6. as from the wrath to come,  
 thy servant shall ever bless and  
 praise thee, and be able to serve  
 thee with more chearful dili-  
 gence. However, Lord, thy  
 Will be done, bring me surely  
 to thy self, let it be by what  
 means thou wilt: Please thy  
 self, thy servant will endeavour  
 to be content: Deny me what  
 things thou wilt, onely deny  
 me not *Grace, Pardon, and thy*  
*Self.*

Interces-  
 son.

And not only upon me, O  
 Lord, but upon all men do  
 thou have mercy, according  
 to the gracious pleasure of thine  
 own most holy Will, Espe-  
 cially upon the universal Church  
 Enlarge thou its bounds; pro-  
 vide for its safety and purity,  
 delivering any part of it, which  
 is

## Private Devotion. 311.

Part IV.  
Chap. 61.

is in danger; and reforming whatsoever of it is corrupted. Do thou with all suitable mercies bless this particular Church: Forgive the publick finnes (\*\*)  
Heal the publi<sup>k</sup> Calamities (\* \*.) Preserve and every way be gracious unto the Kings Majesty, his Queen, and all the Royal Family. Let all thy Priests be cloathed with Righteousness, and let thy work prosper in their hands: and especially within this Parish, of which I am a part, let the knowledge and fear of thee increase. Visit all my Kindred, Relations, and Acquaintances (\*\*) with such blessings as they need.  
Reward

*Here mention  
such sins or ca-  
lamities.*



Part. IV. Reward a thousand fold all  
 Chap. 6. who have shewen any kindness

*In all these vacancies thus marked (\*\*) make such particular mention as thy condition shall require, or prudence suggest.*

to thy servant; especially (\*\*) Forgive and have mercy upon all mine enemies, and let not one of them ever fare the worse for any wrong done to me. Deliver in thine own good

time thy righteous ones out of all their afflictions, and in the mean time support them, sanctifying all unto them. (\*\*) Shew thy self every way all-sufficient unto all thine.

Thank-  
giving.

Finally, O Lord, I bless and praise thy glorious grace, for all those blessings which I enjoy, and those particular deliverances, whether ancient or later

# Private Devotion. 313

latter, which thou hast vouch- Psalm IV.  
Chap. 4.  
safed me. (\*\*) Above all,

for thy redeeming, not onely  
me but the whole humane na-  
ture, by the precious blood  
of thy well-beloved Son; for  
that knowledge which I have  
of thee in him my Saviour  
Christ Jesus; for any sight  
and sense of my sin, which  
through thy grace I have;  
for any hopes of finding mer-  
cy in that great day.

(\*\*) I, O Lord,  
am far less than the  
least of these mer-  
cies. It is thy good-  
ness, thy goodness alone,  
which is the fountain whence  
they came: and mayest thou  
from me, and from Heaven  
and Earth, ever receive the  
glory of that thy goodness.

*Here bleſs God  
for any inward  
joy, enlargements  
&c.*

P

May

Part IV: May I ever serve thee in new-  
 Chap. 6. nefs of life (and answerable  
 walking.

Conclu-  
 sory Petiti-  
 ons.

And do thou forgive not  
 onely my former ingratitude,  
 but my present want of thank-  
 fulness, together with all the  
 sins of these my holy things,  
 washing me, and my very  
 tears, prayers, and penitence  
 in the bloud of of my Saviour  
 Christ Jesus, in whose words  
 thy servant will speak yet once  
 more,

*Our Father, &c.*

It is not to be supposed that this  
 Prayer without any alteration will  
 suit with the condition of every  
 Reader: God forbid all should  
 have sinned at that rate, to come  
 up to which this Prayer was fra-  
 med. The prudent Christian  
 therefore

## Private Devotion. 315

therefore is to add, leave out, alter, Part IV.  
Chap. 6.  
what he sees good; or, if able himself to do better, to lay aside all. Nothing is here obtruded on any, onely directions and help intended to some who need them.

### Sect. 10.

*Of offerings to God for the use of the poor; departure out of the Closet, and behaviour afterwards.*

**M**Y prayers being thus finished, I should not hastily run out, but pause a while, and remember, that there is one work remaining, which is not to be neglected, if I have wherewithall to do it, being it is required by God in an acceptable Fast: and that is to add something every fast, though it be the less to what I have formerly laid aside for the poor; or if there be no such stock already made by me, much more then to design and de-

Part IV. vote somewhat to that purpose.

Chap. 6. *This is the fast I have chosen, to deal*

*Ma. 3.7. thy bread unto the hungry, &c. It*

being thus given, I may deal it when I shall see occasion. Now as to the particular manner of this practice, directions have been above given, which especially upon these dayes it will be expedient to observe.

And this being done, let me with chearfulness depart my Closet; let not my behaviour be without innocent alacrity: and let it be my special care so to order all my carriage on these my fasts, that they may not, if possible, be taken notice of by any but my self and God; as being mindful of that command of

Matt. 6. *my Saviours, Anoint thine head, and wash thy face, that thou appear not unto men to fast that is, behave thy thy self with such outward chearfulness (of which anointing the head and washing the face are Arguments) that no man ordinarily beholding thee, would take the day he sees thee so, to be*

Matt.  
17.

# Private Devotion. 317

be one of thy fast or mourning days. Part IV.  
Chap. 7.

---

## Chap. VII.

*Of great and more extraordinary Fasts, and the work of them.*

**B**ESIDES these my Fasts which come in course, at least once a week, several occasions may beset me, which may require an extraordinary fast. Such is any great evil hanging over mine head, or my friends, or the Nations, any considerable change of my way of living, or the like: but especially, when I am to receive the Holy Communion.

My work upon such occasions will be the same as is formerly directed to: only my Christian discre-

Part IV. tion will order it with a particular  
 Chap. 7. respect to that my great occasion  
 which calls me to fast: which occasion I am especially to meditate upon (and that not without a regard had to my sins: if there be any evil which I deprecate, to consider how my sins have been the causes of it; if any good which I beseech for, how again my sins may blast that) and accordingly to commend it to God in my prayers: in which case also the form of prayer delivered in the foregoing Chapter will not be useless.

Particularly, as to that which will most frequently come in practice my humiliations preparatory for the Lords Supper. In these, besides that examination of my self, which in ordinary course I make, I am to look over mine *Accompt*, to see every week since my last communicating, what my carriage hath been, how I have amended, especially in those particulars, in which I had formerly taken notice of my miscar-



## Private Devotion. 319

miscarriages, and vowed reformation. All my revolts and backslidings are to be attentively viewed in themselves, and in their aggravations, and repentance as before taught, to be with all diligence and fervour, that I can, exercised. (But in case I am a new communicant, and now making my first addresses unto the Lords table, or in case I have formerly been there, but not with so due preparation as I now would make, although the former rules of the practice of humiliation and repentance contain the chief part of my duty; yet directions more particular will be presently subjoyned.

Yea, and besides these times of special exigence, ought I to be often surveying and looking over mine Accompt. In mine ordinary daily devotions, or in my devotions upon my fast dayes I shall find both need and opportunity for it. And if Scholars find it necessary to peruse their own Collections or Common-place books, if Shopkeepers review often

Part IV. their books, to the end they may, by  
 Chap. 8. seeing what they have formerly  
 done, know how to order their future  
 proceedings in their business, so  
 as not to go backward, or be diligens  
 to no purpose, how much more care  
 ought I to take in the concernments  
 of my soul, and for that Jewel which  
 if I loose, although I should gain the  
 whole world, I am irreparably un-  
 done.

---

## Chap. VIII.

### *The Conclusion.*

**T**He Author of this small  
 piece, Christian Reader,  
 is very sure, that be thou who  
 thou wilt, thou canst not  
 but approve for the main that  
 practice, which is here com-  
 mended to thee: although there  
 should be some particulars (as  
 to

## Private Devotion. 321

Part IV.  
Chap. 8.

to the observation of Holy dayes  
or the like ) which may not  
suit with the humour of every  
mans devotion. Confident he  
is, he saith, that the daily  
practice of *Reading, Meditation,*  
*Self-examination, Prayer,* the  
orderly and due practice of *Hu-*  
*miliation, Mortification,* and the  
rest of those Substantials,  
which are here directed to,  
cannot be gainsaid. It might  
have been better taught, but  
he hath done it as well and as  
plainly as he could. Being  
therefore that thou canst not  
but say, he is a good man who  
thus lives, and wish that thou  
ever hadst lived so, he chargeth  
it again upon thy conscience  
thus to live: else art thou self-  
condemned, and guilty of  
known negligence and omis-

Chap. I.

sion. Thou doest not endeavor what notwithstanding thy conscience cannot but approve. He is confident further that if thou didst but feel that peace, quiet, joy and happiness, which such practice leaves behind it, if thou hast any sense what it is to have a clear Conscience, and therefore free and chearful access to God, and an humble fearfulness of the face of men, which without some such practice as this thou canst never have, thou needest no other argument to quicken thee to this practice. Find a greater happiness on earth, than for a man to be at peace with and like himself, and get that peace by any other course, than such exercise of godliness, such circumspection over all  
all

all thy wayes, as hath been <sup>Part IV.</sup>  
 here taught, and thou shalt <sup>Chap. 8.</sup>  
 have leave to neglect all:  
 but if thou canst not, then  
 think thy self bound to these  
 practises. For directions in the  
 making use of the Book thou  
 hast them in the *Admonition to*  
*the Reader*, in the beginning of  
 the Book, whither return and  
 read the whole over again: It  
 will be no whit worse the se-  
 cond time read: And so God  
 bless it and thee.

FINIS

...y waters, as hath been  
here taught, and then shall  
have leave to neglect it:  
but if thou canst not, then  
I look thy self bound to take  
particulars. For directions in the  
making use of the Book thou  
hast them in the Introduction to  
the Reader, in the beginning of  
the Book, which concern and  
are the whole duty of man: it  
will be no white waste of time  
and time read: And to God  
beats it and thee.

# PERSWASIVES

WITH

## DIRECTIONS

To the frequent and Holy use  
OF THE

## LORDS SUPPER.

By way of Appendix to the  
*Method of Private Devotion.*

---

2 Cor. 3. 4.

*Having renounced the hidden things of  
dishonesty, we walk not in craftiness, nor  
handle the Word of God deceitfully, but  
by manifestation of the truth commend  
ourselves to every mans Conscience in  
the sight of God.*

---

London, Printed for John Martin, and are  
to be sold at the Bell a little without  
Temple-Bar. 1669.



PERSWASIVES

WITH

DIRECTIONS

To the Freemen of the

OF THE

LORDS SUPPER

By way of Appendix to the  
Abstract of Private Devotion.

2 Cor. 3. 4.

Having examined the Latin text of  
this book, we wish to certify that  
it is a true and faithful translation  
of the original of the same, and  
entirely to every man's satisfaction  
and glory of God.

Printed for J. B. Smith, and are  
to be sold at the following prices  
without



PERSWASIVES  
WITH  
DIRECTIONS  
To the frequent and Holy use  
OF THE  
Lords Supper.

*By way of an Appendix to  
the Method of Private  
Devotion.*

---

Chap. I.

*A proposition of the particular  
matters to be treated of in  
this Appendix.*

Private devotion was never de-  
signed to take us off from, but  
prepare us for the publick worship  
of

## 328 Directions touching

Chap. 1. of God. Wherefore, as consideration hath been above had, and accomplished endeavoured, touching those secret duties in the closet, which publick prayer, hearing the Word, and sanctifying the Lords day require of me in order to their due performance, so is it but justice now that I consider what particular work in my Closet the worthy receiving of the Lords supper will find my devotion. And forasmuch, as upon the very first thoughts of this most Divine and Heavenly Ordinance, if reflecting withal on common practice, I cannot but observe a double fault very rife in this our *Israel*, of *Neglect* on the one side, some coming not at all or very seldom, and of *Temerity* on the other, in them who come to it (and perhaps often) but consider not much either how or why they come, it ought to be my care to avoid both these rocks, and as commanded both to do it often, and with due remembrance of him whose death

## the Lords Supper. 229

death I *flow* forth till he come. Chap. 2.

### Chap. II.

*Considerations to move to frequenting the Lords Supper.*

**T**O move me to be a frequent guest at the Lords Table; let me duely consider the obligations which lye upon me thereunto: some my Saviour, some the Church, some my very own condition and wants lay upon me.

#### Sect. I.

*Obligations from Christ.*

**F**irst, my Saviours very instituting a means by which I might be so intimately united, and as it were mixt with him, obliges me not onely in point of *Ingenuity* but *Gratitude*. For, let me lay it to heart. May this earthen body of mine, polluted as it is with a world of  
of

## 330. Directions touching

Chap. 2. of sins, be yet made the temple and  
 receptacle of the glorious body of  
 my Lord, nay, in a sort have that  
 body incorporated with it, and is it  
 possible I can be so dull as not to  
 move with all might and haste to  
 the means of such advancement? such  
 dulness and baseness of spirit is  
 not surely incident into a reasona-  
 ble creature, if duely considerative.  
 But then let me remember, This  
 body was pierc'd, and torn, and gi-  
 ven to death for me; this blood spile  
 for the remission of my sins, and  
 will not this endear it to me? Have  
 I means appointed by my very cru-  
 cified Saviour himself, by which I  
 may come and take my share of  
 that very body which hung on the  
 Cross for me, of that blood, by  
 which I believe and hope for the re-  
 mission of my sins; and can I be so  
 irreligiously ungrateful as not to  
 come at it? Are neglects the onely  
 fit retribution to repay unto my cru-  
 cified and bleeding Lord, bleeding  
 for me too, offering me still his  
 blood

## the Lords Supper. 331

bloud ? I cannot sure turn my back. Chap. 2.

Further, a second obligation my Saviour laid upon me, by that strange zeal of love towards me and the humane nature, with which he came to the institution of this Sacrament. When he speaks of his own passion, before he entred upon it, *I have a Baptisme, saith he, to be baptized with, and how am I straitned till it be accomplished?* He seems even to have longed to suffer for us, to have thought the time tedious till he had been betray'd, and scot, and scourged, and tortured, and had bled for us (for a mixture of love and desire of accomplishing his work, conflicting with natural dread of the foreseen cup, must that his being straitned speak) and at the beginning of that supper after which he instituted this Sacrament. *With desire* (the word is used for Lust) have I desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer. As if he had said, within these few hours I shall be lead away to suffer for you, which

## 332 Directions touching

Chap. 2. which (such is my love to you) I long to do. But before that, I have another no less passionate an appetite to satisfy, and that is of instituting that Sacrament by which you, and all that shall believe in my name to the end of the world, may be made partakers of that body and blood, which I am about to give for them. Let me lay then this to heart: can I now add *unnaturalness* to my *disingenuity* and *ungratitude*, and turn my back on my dying Saviour, when he is now greedy and most passionately desirous, I might take my part of that body and blood which was given for my redemption.

If desires move not, yet surely *commands* may, for these are most directly obligatory,

Thirdly then, If my dying Saviour did not *command* me this, and command it too in *remembrance* of his death and passion, and to *show forth his death* till he come, the neglect might possibly seem more



## the Lords Supper. 333

more tolerable. But now to the im- Chap. 2.  
portunity of the Sacraments own nature and our Lords most passionate desires to have it instituted, he hath added his commands also, three times recorded by the Evangelists, and once by St. *Paul*, that it might not be deemed an unnecessary matter, which could be spared, shall I to my disingenuous and unnatural ingratitude, add direct disobedience and rebellion? Shall I stand out against all those obligations which heaven can lay upon me? Will I neither be won by such institutions, which even ingenuity and natural ambition would prompt me to embrace, nor yet by peremptory commands to taste and take what is so provided? What can I, in case I still stand out, think of my self: What can I say in mine own excuse? Or what can I look for, but to be denied my portion in that blood, the participation of which, against such obligations from my Saviour I have thus neglected?

Sect. 2.

# 334 Directions touching

Chap. 2.

Sect. 2.

## *Obligations from the Church.*

**B**ESIDES this, the Church hath layd obligations upon me here-to both by its *Practice*, *Command* and *Discipline*.

As to the *Practice* of the Church, it will not be easie to pitch upon any publick degeneracy in the present Church, which the practice of the Primitive Church doth more upbraid us of, than infrequent and seldom communicating. In all likelihood immediately after our Lords Ascension, and the Descension of the Holy Ghost, the Apostles, and those early Profelytes of Christianity daily received the Lords Supper: which though a most learned person, who more than once affirmed it most probable, (from *Acts 2.*) afterwards seems to doubt, yet I doubtless of, forasmuch as St. *Austin* acquaints us it was usual even in his dayes. How-

Epist. 118  
ad Janu-  
ar.

ever

## the Lords Supper. 335

ever that none of their solemn As- Chap. 2.  
 semblies in the antient Church were  
 without a Communion is most cer-  
 tain from all antiquity: and the Acts 20.  
 Scripture it self testifies expressely as<sup>7.</sup>  
 to the Lords day: The restauration  
 of which pious course, that our  
 Church at the Reformation design-  
 ed, is from hence most evident, that  
 there is no Lords day nor Festival  
 throughout the year, which hath not  
 a peculiar Communion Service ap-  
 pointed for it.

¶ If the practice of the Primitive  
 and purer Church move us not, I  
 confess there is reason to fear the  
*injunctions* of our particular Church  
 will but little avail. However, he  
 who bid us account that brother as<sup>Math 18.</sup>  
*an Heathen and Publican* who re-<sup>17.</sup>  
 fused to hear the Church, thought  
 sure that her commands had no  
 small obligation on her children.  
 And the Apostle that commanded  
*us to obey those that rule over us*, Heb. 13.  
*and submit our selves to them in af-*<sup>17.</sup>  
*much as they watch for our souls;*  
 and

## 336 Directions touching

Chap. 2. and withal added, that it is *unprofitable for us*, that by reason of our untractableness they should be able onely with grief to give account to heaven of us, conceived it fit we should be obedient to such wholesome Laws; as those our Rulers should give unto us.

Now the substance of the Commands of our Church in this case we find in the Rubrick at the end of the Communion, that in all Parishes every Parishioner communicate, *at least thrice a year*. This is the least our Church will tolerate; not but that it is evident she should have her Children more frequently to communicate, as appears from that expression *at the least thrice*; but considering the common backwardness of people, she commanded what she might have hopes to obtain, the *least* which possibly (the generality of mens occasions being all considered) she could judge in any sort tolerable, and that was *thrice a year*. Wherefore in Cathedral and Collegiat

# the Lords Supper. 337

legiate Churches, it is injoynd Chap. 2  
 (as in the precedent part of the  
 same Rubrick) that all the Ministers  
 thereof communicate (except in  
 case of reasonable impediments, of  
 which negligence undoubtably is  
 none) every Lords day at least; that  
 expression intimating (as well as an-  
 other [ *use, on Holidays if there*  
*be no Communion* ] a little before)  
 that it was fit and requisite that  
 commonly on dayes of Solemn Af-  
 sembles, as are Lords dayes and  
 Holidayes, there should be a Com-  
 munion. ¶ Of this requiring of her  
 Ministers (where in convenient  
 number to make up a Communion)  
 that they should thus often commu-  
 nicate, whereas the people seem left  
 at greater liberty, I suppose the rea-  
 son is, because she presumes and re-  
 quires them to be of stricter lives  
 and sanctity than the common sort.  
 So that it will from hence follow  
 that our Church judgeth it requi-  
 site to all persons, who would live  
 strictly and more devote to God,  
 Q than

Chap. 2. than the common sort, who too much inumber themselves in the world, frequently if not weekly, to communicate.

As to *Discipline*, it hath been most reasonable adjudged, that the severe sentence of *excommunication* is most justly due to such who neglect the participation of the Lords Supper, The Canon enjoyneth the Minister and Churchwarden to signifie such: The Churchwarden is bound upon his oath, as the Minister by the fidelity he owes to the Church, to make presentment of such. And amongst those particular cases for which by Statute, the Writ to take the *Excommunicate person* lies, not receiving the Communion is one expressly. Which severe Discipline none can justly blame, who considers, that such persons do in a manner *Excommunicate* themselves, or will grant, that the Church and the Magistrate are bound not to see the Commands of Christ, and Ordinances of the Gospel

## the Lords Supper. 339

spel neglected, but to constrain such, Chap. 2.  
 who have subjected themselves to  
 the Gospel, to obedience to it,  
 where they will not voluntarily per-  
 form it. And it seems reasonably  
 demandable, wby a man should be  
 punished for *swearing*, for *pro-  
 phaning the Lords day*, or the  
 like crimes (as those who blame the  
 severity of this Law judge fit) if he  
 may not be punished for *gross neg-  
 lect* of the Lords Supper; seeing  
 both equally offend against *Divine*  
 commands I cannot then but in  
 reason think my self bound fre-  
 quently to communicate by the ob-  
 ligations which the primitive and  
 present Church lay upon me.

Sect. 3.

*Of obligations from within.*

**L**ASTly, doth not my own condi-  
 tion and wants strongly impor-  
 tune and oblige me to it?

1. Have I so faithfully kept  
 the covenant of my Baptisme

Q 2

and



## 340 Directions touching

Chap. 1. and those latter vows and engagements which I have made to God that I do not need to renew them? Alas! have I been faithful to any one of them? Now what so proper or firm renovation of them as by this second Sacrament. If I have broken my covenant, I have certainly forfeited the benefits I covenanted for, pardon of my sins, and life eternal. And how can I expect these if when God daily offers to receive me again into covenant (as he doth by this Sacrament) I neglect to come in, and enter covenant. But, possibly that I think I can do, by setting down private resolutions in my Closet, without comming in public to the Lords Table: Let me enquire then further:

2. Are all my corruptions so mortified, and graces so strong that single vows will hold me? Do not I daily find a double, yea treble and manifold cord (all the methods which I can invent or use to confirm my resolutions) to be little enough

## the Lords Supper. 34<sup>r</sup>

enough, and ( God knows ) many Chap. 2.  
times too little? And must I not  
confess this Sacrament instituted by  
Christ as the primary and most So-  
vereign means of strengthening me?  
Nay; do not I find in my own ex-  
perience, possibly, that of all the  
vows that ever I made in my life, I  
have been most cautious of those  
which I sealed in the blood of my  
Saviour? Though possibly ( wretch  
that I am ! ) I have broken some of  
them yet I broke them most diffi-  
culty. With what conscience then,  
can I absent my self from, and neg-  
lect this Sacrament? Am I affraid  
of making my vowes too strong?  
But possibly, I am jealous of my  
self, that I shall break even these  
vows thus renewed, and thus seal-  
ed, and therefore fear by new com-  
municating I shall only aggravate  
my succeeding falls. Let me consi-  
der this case :

Is my guilt like to be any whit  
the less, because I do not strive  
against sin as much as I may, and use

Q 3

against

## 342 Directions touching

Chap. 3. against it to all means I have?

As in my present state, I despond in a manner of my own standing: of these two it is more likely, I shall be able to overcome when I struggle to the last effort, and leave no means unattempted, by which I may strengthen my self and get above mine enemies. Certainly if I endeavour my utmost against known and deliberate sins, God will not charge every slip or surprisal as a cancelling of this my renewed Covenant. But possibly I distrust my self and fear I shall not, do all I can, to stand: In this case to come to a short issue, either I do resolve for happiness or not: If I resolve not for happiness indeed, 'tis no matter whether I communicate or no; I am a person desperate, who have given up my self to Sin and Hell. If I do resolve for happiness, it is certain I must resolve to exert my utmost might against every sin, and especially against such to which I am most subject. And if I have so re-  
solved

# The Lords Supper: 343

Chap. 2.

resolved, but distrust my own constancy to such passed resolves, I shall be willing and desirous to use all means to enforce, ensure and (if it were possible) constrain my self to constancy; and God hath not appointed, nor can I find out a more Sovereign means than this of the Lords Supper. I am therefore in conscience, as I tender my own Salvation, to frequent it, and in case I should yet fall again, to sorrow more deeply for such supposed future fall than ever, to resolve and endeavour new amendment (as before considered in the Practice of Repentance) to weigh with my self what a sad condition they are in, who have the abused blood of Christ to witness against them, from which estate there is no way in the world to rescue me, but resuming, with new vigor, my former good resolutions, and fresh addresses unto that blood for pardon and strength: thus am I to persist in the daily practice of repentance, and mortification, and

Priv.

Devot.

Part. 4.

Chap. 6.

Sect. 4, §

Q 4.

use

## 344 Directions touching

Chap. 2. Use of all means, especially this of this  
strengthening Sacrament, as often  
as I have opportunity; to the end  
I may rescue my self out of this  
snare of the Devil. So that in fine,  
if this be my case I see my self inex-  
cusably necessary to my own ruine,  
if I neglect this recovering Sacra-  
ment.

¶ Besides these, I have great rea-  
son to fear there are other wants in  
my soul, which oblige me to fre-  
quent communicating. I enquire  
therefore further.

3. Do I use to keep all my ac-  
counts so even with God, and my  
heart in such a gracious frame, that  
I have not much need of that Or-  
dinance, which shall bring me to  
such righting my accounts (I mean  
to the strict examination of my self,  
touching new sins, reforming for  
the future, and sueing out the par-  
don of what is past) and to a more  
tender and heavenly temper of  
mind? Alas, is not there many a  
sin which I fall into in my days,  
which

## The Lords Supper 345

Chap. 12.

which passeth me unrepented! And as to all my private Fasting and Humiliations of my self, Have I not need of some efficacious means, to make me more strict and careful, to deliver me from my usual slightness and perfunctory performance of such duties? Again, Doth not many a day pass me, in which I have great reason to complain of the want of a due sense of God, and my own duty on my heart? Do not I put up many a dull, and heedless and hard-hearted prayer? and must I not confess, that, as it is very sinful and dangerous thus to live, with particular sins unrepented of. (or only carelessly considered) and with an heart very much void of an heedful fear, or eyeing of God; so that the Lords Supper is a very proper and effectual remedy to both these so dangerous and intolerable evils? Can I then impute either to frailty of my nature, and to common indispositions incident from worldly business; if in the

Q. 5.

mean

## 346 Directions touching

Chap. 2. mean time I am conscious to my self  
of my neglect of that divine Ordinance, which would rescue me from both. I see then, that that happy condition, into which preparation for this Sacrament would set me (of having matters straiter in a good measure between Heaven and my soul, by reason whereof I were fit for any thing, even death it self) and that blessed frame of spirit, into which both preparation and the frequent participation of the Ordinance it self would bring me, render the neglect most inexcusable. Again,

4, Do I walk so innocently, and with such exactness observe the rules of Charity, as that I have no need of that holy Seal of Christian Communion, which I dare not come unto, till I have reconciled my heart to every man living, and so my power made satisfaction for every wrong I have done, and put an end to all unchristian contentions and animosities between me  
and



# the Lords Supper 347

and others? Certainly my life is Chap. 2.  
 not so purely inoffensive, but I  
 wrong many, if not by deed yet by  
 words, or at least by uncharitable  
 surmises and censures of them, and  
 possibly too by secret ill will and  
 grudge. And are these things either  
 unnecessary to be rooted out; or  
 am I so ready and diligent in the do-  
 ing of it, and in further reconciling  
 my self, and satisfying my offended  
 brother, that for this purpose I have  
 no need of this Sacrament which  
 shall enforce me after a sort there-  
 to?

5. Is my Christian faith and hope  
 so strong, my comforts and holy  
 joyes so firm and advanced, that I  
 find not this Seal of my union with  
 my Saviour and pardon of all my  
 sins most necessary? Should a dan-  
 gerous disease befall me, or my life  
 otherwise be hazarded, have I a  
 confidence of my future happiness  
 strong enough to bear me up above  
 the terrors of death, and to supply  
 with courage to endure whatever

Q 6 danger

## 348 Directions touching

Chap. 2. danger I may be brought into, even death it self, rather than seek an escape by any unworthy means? Rather, were I now to dye, would I not miserably tremble, and doubt of my future estate? Were I strip of all earthly comforts, should I not be miserably dissatisfied, and unable to quiet my self, and meekly endure the cross with due respect and the recompence of reward, which I have not possibly such a well-grounded hope (much less such a certainty, perswasion and assurance) of, as it concerns me to provide, for the arming my self against all trials. And let me say this to heart duely? If I come to be perplext with fears and doubts upon my death-bed, want courage, or behave my self basely in suffering, shall I not then too late a thousand times blame and bitterly cry out of my neglect of this sacred Ordinance? Shall I not say all I could have done had been little enough to support my spirit, and be ready to sink, that I have been so regardless of this **Ear-**

## the Lords Supper. 349

Lastly: But suppose I have been Chap. 2.  
so happy a man as to have behaved  
myself so Christianly in all these  
particulars, as that my conscience  
accuseth me not of any fault or de-  
fect (which I shall scarce find) ei-  
ther as to unfaithfulness in holiness,  
or neglectiveness of my great ac-  
counts, unmeet frame of spirit, un-  
charitableness, weakness of faith and  
hope, yet I shall have need of this  
Sacrament to keep me in this so  
blessed a condition. Certainly I have  
not, nor can have any assurance of  
my perseverance, (which the word  
of God will warrant or not call  
wild and presumptuous) without my  
use of those means, which the Go-  
spel ordained, as well for the  
continuance, as advance of me in  
grace.

Sec. 4.

# 350 Directions touching

Chap. 2

sect. 4

*The summe of all urged against the ordinary excuses.*

**T**O sum up all then. Is the Lords Supper so great a priviledge, yea even advancement to my nature? Was my Lord so passionately desirous to have it instituted? Did he now dying strictly charge me to eat thereof in remembrance of him? Doth the Church by her practice, command, and discipline enjoin and even enforce me to it, and is the thing it self so exceeding needful and beneficial to me, being a renovation of my Covenant with God, a confirmation of my vows, and a strengthening me against all sins; yea further, a means to place me in the full favour of God, and bring me to a most heavenly temper of mind, to renew, maintain and augment my charity, my faith, hope, and Christian comfort, and a pre-

# the Lords Supper. 351

351

preservative of me all my dayes; *Chap. 2.*  
 and can I absent my self from it at  
 any time; when I have occasion of  
 receiving? Or if I once, or seldom  
 absent my self from it, yet can I  
 possibly live in the neglect of it? It  
 is certain if I do, nothing of rea-  
 son, Christianity, nor sense of my  
 own interest can move me. Suppose  
 Christ himself should speak from  
 heaven ( and so he doth by his word  
 and Ministry ) suppose when I turn  
 my back upon that prepared table, he  
 should call to me from above: You!  
*I dyed for you*, I commanded you  
 when dying in remembrance of that  
 my death, to eat of this bread,  
 and drink of this cup, the benefit  
 thereof is greater than you con-  
 ceive; I have here commissioned  
 my servants to give it you; here it  
 stands prepared for you; my Church  
 commands, invites, doth all possibly  
 to bring you to it; can you turn  
 your back upon this body, this blood  
 of mine? Is it nothing to you, that  
 it was given for you? nothing that

it

## 352 Directions touching

Chap. 2. it is now offered to be given to you?  
 Do you expect pardon, and grace,  
 and life everlasting by it, and can  
 you neglect it? What answer  
 could I make? Can I think in my  
 conscience I should not be ashamed  
 of making this? Lord, the Church  
 professeth she thinks to receive it;  
 kneeling is a reverence befitting so  
 sacred matter: I think that reve-  
 rence to be too much, (though  
 there be neither express Scripture, nor  
 evident reason for such my thoughts)  
 And, because I may not be so irreve-  
 rent as I think fit, I will not come. In  
 short: All objections I can make of  
 things of this nature are either pure  
 cavils, or matters very uncertain and  
 disputable. The thing urged is a cer-  
 tain and undoubted duty: Now,  
 am I just to my reason, or at all truly  
 conscientious, if for *matters dubi-  
 ous*, which (if the Church know  
 more than I, as in good manners I  
 am bound to think) are safe) I  
 neglect so *undoubted, weighty and  
 beneficial a duty?*

## the Lords Supper. 353

It can be no excuse to me, that I come not because I am not prepared, since to be unprepared is my sin: and to say I wanted time to prepare my self, is as much as to say, I am not at leasure to be a Christian. I cannot therefore but see my self in conscience bound frequently to communicate, and it is fit I consult how frequently.

### Chap. III.

*How often a Christian ought to partake of the Lords Supper, and at what age to begin.*

**N**OW because nothing can be done often, which doth not once begin to be done, therefore this Question *how often* ought I to resort unto the Lords Table, includes this, (which it is meet be first answered) *How soon* shall I come *hither*, or at *what age*?

To



## 354. Directions touching

Chap. I. To this the Orders of our Church seem to answer, at ~~sixteen~~ years of age. But then, that passage is to be interpreted by others, which require that all persons now growing adult, be *confirmed* before their admission to the Lords Supper. So that the true answer to this Question depends upon the right understanding of *Confirmation*, of which riefly.


It is agreed by all sober men (though possibly otherwise of different persuasions) that there should be some solemn transition from our Infant-Membership to our adult, that is, from our being Christian Children, and as it were under age, to our being reckoned ~~super~~, and as it were Christians of our selves. To this purpose it is requisite, that being baptized in our infancy, when we could not personally take upon us the vow, and profession of Christianity, which was made in our names by others, we by our own choice openly take  
this

## the Lords Supper. 355

this vow and profession on our Chap. 3.  
selves. This the Church of *England*  
binds all to, in binding them to be  
confirm'd as is evident by the Of-  
fice of Confirmation: and after  
such assumption of this profession,  
and vow on themselves (following  
therein pure and primitive antiqui-  
ty) the orders that they receive a  
Blessing from the Bishop by im-  
position of his hands, after which  
they are reputed adult Members,  
and have a full right to all the Or-  
dinances of the Gospel.

According to the true intent of  
this wholesome Order (whatever  
is practised contrary (though in  
deed we are not to reckon every  
Episcopal Benediction to be pro-  
perly Confirmation, and so not the  
intent of the Church contrariated  
so often as otherwise we might sus-  
pect) every person to be confirm-  
ed, is supposed to have been so  
far instructed, *privately* by his Pa-  
rents or Godfathers and Godmo-  
thers, and more *publicly* catechi-  
zed

## 356 Directions touching


Chap. 3.  zed by the Minister; yea, and taught to understand the words, and sense of the Catechisme, that he is in some competent measure, able to give account of his faith, not possibly by declaring it in a long formal Oration, but by answering (as to the substance) such few plain matters as are immediately requisite to Salvation. And that this is the Churches intent, that all persons come thus qualified to confirmation, both the *Rubrick* precedent, and the *Preface* unto the office of Confirmation abundantly testifie. Now inasmuch as till such their Confirmation, and consequently such foregoing aptness, and understanding, young persons are not to be admitted to the Lords Supper, it is evident that the mind of our Church in answer to this question is in short this. Every person when come now to such competent years of discretion, that he understands the main necessary matters of Christian faith, (in which his

## the Lords Supper. 357

his own word is not to betaken, Chap. 3.  
but trial to be made by the Governours or Ministers of the Church) is to make a solemn Prefession of his owning the vow of his Baptisme, and of Christian faith in manner above intimated, and after this to be admitted to, and henceforth to frequent the Lords Supper. Now this the generality of people (supposing them Christianly brought up, and instructed) may be well able to do *about Sixteen* years of age. *About* it, I say, for it is not to be thought the Church intended critically to insist upon two or three Months.

But in case at sixteen years old, any are unable to give such account of Christianity, as mentioned, I see not that our Church admits them to confirmation, much less to the Holy Communion. Yet is it by the way, most justly enjoined that all of Sixteen not communicating be presented, to the end, that if any of that age are not duely instructed,

## 358 Directions touching

Chap. 3.  stru<sup>ct</sup>ed, both they and those who have; or have had the care of them, may be admonished they suffer not their growing farther up in such ignorance, and unchristian neglects.

¶ Now as to the frequent iterations of my addressees unto the Lords Table, by what I have above meditated touching the obligations which call me thither, I cannot but conclude, it is my duty to embrace every opportunity, which is given me: nor can I justifie any turning my back upon it, when God by his Ministers invites me thereto: my unpreparedness is my fault, it can be no excuse. True indeed, if unprepared I may not in any wise presume to come; but in case of my abstaining, because unprepared, I am to account and bewail that, as a double sin; the one of neglecting the Lords Supper, the other of being in such an unchristian temper, that I was unfit for it, and could not without venturing my self upon  
on

## the Lords Supper. 359

on damnation perform my Chri- Chap. 3.  
stian duty. In most congregations  
at present, this Sacrament is so of-  
ten administred, that all the Pa-  
rishioners may partake thereof four  
times a year: but for my part, I  
see not how I can approve that  
mans spirit, who would be content  
with it eight times a year, if with  
convenience and order he could  
have it oftner: And I beseech God  
not to lay to the charge of this Na-  
tion the great neglects of this the  
chief of Evangelical Ordinances,  
and higest advancement of the  
Christian soul on this side Heaven.

Chap,

# 360 Directions touching

Chap. 4.

## Chap. IV.

*Considerations to move to such  
care, and Seriousness in recei-  
ving, as that we may receive  
worthily.*

**T**His the eminency and dignity  
of this holy Mystery now  
mentioned, is a fit consideration to  
move me to the greatest *care* and  
*seriousness* possible therein; which  
will preserve me from the second  
ordinary miscarriage of inconfide-  
rateness and consequent *unworthi-  
ness* at the Lords Table. For,

(1.) Shall I be heedless and  
vain in the highest, and most hea-  
venly Ordinance? Am I convinced  
that I ought not to pray to God, or  
hear his word with an unprepared,  
or inconsiderate mind, much less  
with an heart regarding inwardly  
iniquity: and can I tolerate such a  
frame




# the Lords Supper. 361

frame of spirit at the Lords Table? Chap. 4.

Doth the Prophet tell the house of Israel, that every man of them, who set up his idols in his heart, and put the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and came to the Prophet, him who thus came, the Lord would answer according to the multitude of his idols, and take him in his own heart, that is, him who came to hear from the Prophet with a corrupt and wicked heart, having not before laid aside his lust, and ungodly intentions by an impartial resolution of his duty (which could only turn the stumbling block of his iniquities out of his heart) him the Lord would entertain with all that displeasure which belonged to all the multitude of his abominations? Was this the entertainment of such? how infinitely displeased then will he be at me if I come, not to receive his word from his Prophet, but the body and blood of his Son with such an heart as would provoke him not  
R onely

## 362 Directions touching

Chap. 4  onely in any meaner sacred action, but in my common life; and when to this my real ungodliness, and rottenness of heart, I at once add the greatest *presumption*, in daring to come, whither none but holy persons are invited, and the greatest *hypocrisie*, in pretending by such coming I am of the number of those, who have cleansed their hearts that they may be meet guests at so sacred a feast?

Further (2.) Let me take into consideration the vast advantages of having worthily received. It being supposed that I come with a meet heart, God by this Sacrament both *bestows*, and *seals* to me all the *benefits of the Covenant of Grace*, and the blood of my Saviour.

1. He thereby gives me of his *Grace and Spirit*, the true bread of life which feeds my Soul to happiness: that is, he really communicates to me a *supernatural strength*, whereby I may be able, if I will make use of it, to resist and  
over-

## the Lords Supper. 363

overcome all temptations, to master Chap. 4.

all my lusts, to perform every duty of devotion to God, of Justice, and Charity to my neighbour, and of temperance, and self denial as to my self; to perform all those, I say, and that in a most lively and spiritual sort; which I endeavouring to do, by exercise of this the grace of God, shall grow up in all Christian virtues, and comfortably still advance till I come to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: I shall be as a tree planted in the Courts of God, ever green, and flourishing, and full of fruit: and being so, shall be the delight of Heaven, and the joy of holy Angels and a comfort to my self all my dayes.

2. God further hereby makes over to me, and bestows on me the pardon of all my sins, the merits of his Son, and a full right to be in his Kingdom of Glory a co-heir with him, to whom I am by this Sacrament most intimately united. As he

R 2

gives

## 364 Directions touching

Chap. 4 gives me my Lords body, the spiritual Bread of his Grace to strengthen my inward man, (as before considered) so also his blood, to wash both soul and body from all original and contracted guilt, and to present them spotless, as that blood, in which they appeare before the throne of God: and being thus washed and purified, the merits of that blood are mine, even Heaven, and eternal life, which God hereby, I say, makes over to me.

3. This the body and blood of my Saviour mystically and spiritually thus received by me turns even to my very body a seed of immortality, and of resurrection to eternal life. For, *As in Adam all died, so in Christ shall all be made alive*; and particularly it is by union with the body of Christ, yea, even while they sleep in the dust; that the bodies of Saints shall enjoy an happy resurrection; and this union is by no means more intimately effected than by this Sacrament. And thus much

1 Cor.  
15. 22.

## the Lords Supper. 365

much the Christian Church hath <sup>Chap. 4.</sup> from the Primitive dayes believed, *Ignatius* (whose epistles came in the ancient Church next in authority to the Apostolical ones, as they did in antiquity) call the elements thus received a *portion of immortality*, and an *antidote against death*, that is, <sup>In Ep<sup>a</sup> stol ad Ephes.</sup> against the power and final prevalence of it.

Lastly, as God hereby gives and makes over all those benefits, so he *seals* to the faithfull heart this his gift, *ensures* and ascertains it as of his present giving the Spirit, and pardon to it, so of his future granting an happy resurrection, and eternal life: and what more firm and precious Seal can he set thereto, than this, that he makes us partakers of the body and blood of his Son, as a pledge of our being at present in his favour and loves, and of our certain future being in his Bosome, and Kingdom? It is certain by the constant experience of all devout and serious Chri-

## 366 Directions touching

Chap. 4. stians that there is no means under heaven which fills them with more assured confidence of Glory, with higher transports of holy joyes, and fownes of comforts, than doth the meet participation of this sacred Mystery. It gives them such holy lifts to the throne of their glorified Saviour whom they feed on, that they scarce know whether they are not there, and are ready to call out with that sweet Singer of our *Israel*:

*Mr. Ker-  
bert.*

*Give me my captiue Soul, or take*

*My Body also thither:*

*Another lift like this would make*

*Them both to be together.*

The consideration of all which, as it should beget in me an holy appetite and hunger after this heavenly cheer; so it cannot, if duely considered, but make me very serious, and devout in my approaches, inasmuch as it is certain, all those benefits are mist, and it is only an empty feast, if I receive unworthily.

But yet (3.) there is somewhat else  
which

# the Lords Supper. 367

which may further move me to the Chap. 4.  
highest care herein; to wit, besides  
the *loss* of so great good, the vast,  
and almost unparralleld danger of  
coming unworthily. There are but  
two things which make dangers  
great; the *eminency* of the evil in-  
curred, and the *subjectness* to incurr  
it, and both points are very confi-  
derable in the present case.

1. There is scarce in all the Scri-  
pture an expression which bears  
such a terrible import of certain  
damnation or judgement, as doth  
that of *eating and drinking damna- 1 Cor.*  
*on to our selves.* It would seem to im- 11.  
timate a mans having swallowed his  
own condemnation. And what sin,  
saying only the unpardonable sin, do  
we judge more hainous than the  
betraying and crucifying the Lord  
of life? What wretch like *Judas*?  
Now the Apostle in a manner pla-  
ceth all unworthy receivers in a pa-  
rity of guilt with him, when he  
saith, *Whosoever shall eat this bread, 1 Cor.*  
*or drink this cup unworthily, shall be 11.*

R 4

guilty



## 368 Directions touching

Chap. 4. *guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. Guilty; if not of the crucifying afresh the Lord of life, and putting him to open shame, yet of treading under foot the Son of God, and*

Heb. 6.6. *counting the blood of the Covenant, wherewith only he can be sanctified an unholy thing. The Christian Church only believes touching this sin, that by deep repentance, and amendment it is pardonable (that blood having of old healed even those who spilt it) but that certainly it is a sin of the highest nature next to that of despite, or blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.*

Heb, 10. 29. *True, the guilt is greater, or less according to the knowledge, and means which the peccant persons have had to have prepared themselves but in all certainly very great.*

¶ And, as the danger is thus great, by reason the guilt thus incurred is so certain, and so grievous, so is it by reason of our *subjectness to incur it.* What experience have I of the base slightness, and floath

of

## the Lords Supper 369

of mine own heart? how apt am I Chap. 5.  
to slubber over Devotions, and to  
dispencc with lame preparation?  
And I can think the enemy whoever  
watches to plunge me in the deepest  
guilt will not be ready to help on  
my facility towards perfunctoryness,  
when he is sure it will involve me  
in such wretched guilt. Consider-  
ing this therefore, that I take the  
ready course to ensure mine own  
condemnation, If I come unwor-  
thily, and that partly of my own  
nature, partly by instigation of  
mine enemy, I am prone thus to  
presume upon my own ruine, ought  
I not to be awakened to the highest  
care and seriousness of devotion  
in this matter?

Chap.

*In what points that care consists,  
which he must take, who would  
be a worthy Communicant?*

**B**ut what *care* is that, which will secure me from this danger, and what are the particulars of that Devotion, which will render me a *worthy* Communicant?

In answer hereunto it is certain. *First*, that if I come not with a truly penitent, faithful, thankful and charitable heart, honestly resolved upon impartial endeavours of future holiness, I come to this Sacrament unworthily; care therefore must be taken *before hand* that I come with this wedding garment to this seal of the *Esponsals* between my Lord, and my soul,

And *Secondly*, it is as certain, that if I behave my self with lightness, ~~vanity~~, or dulness; or in any sort  
but

# the Lords Supper 371

but with the intention, and height of *Chap. 5.*  
present devotion, I behave my  
self unworthily there, Care there-  
fore must be taken that my mind  
be thus kept at home, and intent  
upon this heavenly feast, *while I*  
*am there* to feed thereon.

And *Lastly*, It is no less certain  
that if after reception hereof, I  
remit my diligence, and thinking  
now, as to all which is past, I have  
made even with God, begin to  
take to my self more liberty of life  
than what, before receiving, I could  
judge tollerable, or any otherwise  
grow heedless of my vows; I ren-  
der my self *consequently* an un-  
worthy receiver. Care therefore  
must be had of my *future carriage*,  
and ways that they answer my en-  
gagements.

Now as to directions in all these  
points, they may be fetcht from  
that most excellent book, *The whole Partic: 31*  
*duty of man*, where they are  
very faithfully and plainly laid  
down, (A Book which he who

## 372 Directions touching

**Chap. 6** writes this, as he loves his soul, commends to his \* Reader.) Notwithstanding, lest every reader should not have it at hand, and lest the present work should be more imperfect, brief consideration shall be taken of each point, and First, of what is fit to be done by way of preparation.

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### Chap. VI.

*of more remote Preparation:  
the Doctrine of the Lords  
Supper briefly opened.*

**I**N order to my taking a perfect account what my particular preparation should be for the Lords Supper, It is meet I consider with my self, whether I have formerly received it, or whether now at first I come thereto. And if I have formerly received, whether I now think in my conscience, I then came thereto.

## the Lords Supper. 373

thereto duely prepared or no, If Chap. 6.  
 I either now first come to receive,  
 or now first seriously set my self  
 (deeply bewailing my former un-  
 worthiness) to endeavour appro-  
 ving my self a worthy receiver,  
 my *first care* must be that I *under-*  
*stand the doctrine* of this holy My-  
 stery, which it will be most proper  
 for me to fetch out of that good  
 practical Book (containing the sub-  
 stance of Christian duties) which I  
 am above supposed to have chosen  
 to my self to read, and make my  
 own. But if any have it not better,  
 and more at large, the substance of  
 it is briefly this.

All mankind having sinned, and  
 so forfeited that happiness which  
 the first Covenant promised only to  
 unsinning, and perfect obedience,  
 were in a state of present and fu-  
 rure misery, when it pleased God  
 out of his meer goodness, to pro-  
 mise, and in fulness of time, to send  
 us a Redeemer, who should suffer  
 for us what we were to suffer, and  
 by

Chap. 6. by his blood establish a new covenant between God and us, on those terms, that if we would uniformly and impartially receive the Gospel, that gracious rule of life which he should deliver unto us, yielding thereunto the obedience of faith, and persevering therein, this faith, through the merits of our Saviour, should be reckoned unto us for righteousness, all our sins, through the same his merits, should be forgiven, and a Crown of everlasting life, which by his blood he purchased to all who should prove thus faithful unto the end, should be given unto us. And this, that we on our part might be able to fulfil, he not onely in his own good time most clearly revealed what he required of us, pressed with the most powerful motives and incentives to commend it to us, but sent his Spirit both to incline, and enable us to what God, and our own happiness, according to these terms required of us. And that we might be assured



# the Lords Supper. 375

Chap. 6.

assured that he on his part would perform what he had promised, he appointed certain solemn and religious Rites to be observed by us, which as often as we should come unto, we should vow to do our part, and he, under our use of that religious Rite, would both impart to us strength to perform that our vow, and seal unto us our pardon of all that should be then past, and of future salvation, the things which he on his part promised. These religious Rites we call Sacraments: so that in short our Church most fully and plainly defines a Sacrament to be, *An outward and visible sign [or token] of an inward and spiritual grace given, [or thereby conveyed unto us] ordained by Christ himself [so that it is not in the power of man or of the Church to ordain Sacraments] as a means whereby we receive the same [viz. whereby we receive the Grace of Gods Spirit for the sanctification of our hearts, and to pardon of our sins.] and is*  
pledge

Chap. 6. *pledge to assure us thereof*, that is, of his pardoning our sins, and continuing such the Grace of his Spirit unto us. Or shorter, A Sacrament is a *Seal of the Covenant of Grace*; (1.) on our parts of the Vow of Evangelical obedience, and (2.) on Gods part of his giving unto us his Spirit, the pardon of our sins, *all things good for us, and finally eternal life.*

Of these Sacraments we acknowledge but two, (because Christ ordained no more, and no one ought to appoint Seals of the Covenant but he who made it.) The first whereof is Baptisme, by which we vow obedience, and receive such grace, and pardon as mentioned, This Vow of our Baptisme, so far as if we live to discretion, or active years, we through humane frailty and our own corruptions, and otherwise break, there is a second Seal, or Sacrament, which acknowledging our breaches of our former Vow, we are to come unto, and renew and renew our Vow, and God accordingly

## the Lords Supper. 377

accordingly *renews* his *promise* of *Chap. 6.*  
*grace*, and *pardon*, and *eternal life*  
unto us, and *communicates* further  
*strength* for the performance of  
what on our part concerns us. The  
outward signs are Bread and Wine,  
the things signified, the Body and  
Bloud of Christ: The breaking of  
the Bread typifies the breaking and  
rending of our Lords Body on the  
Cross: the pouring out of the  
Wine the shedding his Bloud in his  
Crucifixion. Nor are his Body and  
Bloud hereby onely *signified*, but  
also *conveighed* to the faithful soul.  
So those words of the Consecration  
assure us. *This is my body* \* : Nor  
this bread is my body; but this *See*  
*taking and eating* is my body, that *Pract.*  
is, (as the \* Apostle St. *Paul* ex- *Lib. 6.*  
pounds it) the *Communion*, or par- *Scit.*  
ticipation of my Body. This Bread *last.*  
and Wine being blessed, and distri- *\* 1 Cor.*  
buted according to his command, *16.*  
God doth thereby as truly conveigh  
and give to every faithful Receiver  
the

## 378 Directions touching

Chap. 6. the Body and Bloud of Christ, that is, the crucified Saviour, as the Minister gives him those elements. As truly, I say, he gives him the Crucified Saviour, but not bodily but mystically: nor must we conceive the Body of our Saviour to move from its place, or come out of heaven; but his Body and bloud is given unto us, and we receive them, (*verily and indeed* saith our Church) not in our *mouths* but *souls*, that is, we receive our Saviour as crucified, we receive our share of right in his body, and bloud, and all the powers, virtues, benefits, and fruits thereof, especially those before mentioned, of spiritual strength, and pardon, and eternal life.

By this plain view of the doctrine of the Lords Supper, I cannot but see what I am to expect at the Lords Table, that is, I am prepared (in the Apostles language) to *discern the Lords body*; and some light is given into what I must do by way of further

## the Lords Supper. 379

ther preparation; for being I am Chap. 7.  
to renew my Covenant with hea-  
ven, it first concerns me to ex-  
amine, how I have broken it.

### Chap. VII.

#### *Of more proximate Preparation for the Lords Supper.*

**T**He particular and more imme-  
diate preparation for the  
Lords Supper, the Apostle calls *Ex-* (1)  
*amining a mans self.* And the first 1 Cor. 11.  
thing, whereof I am to examine  
my self. is, whether I have know-  
ledge sufficient to *discern the Lords*  
*body*, that is, whether I understand  
the doctrine of it or no. If I do  
not, I ought to refrain till I have du-  
ly informed my self; which I may  
not by any means long delay. ¶ The (2)  
next thing to be examined I already  
see to be, my sins, the breaches of  
my

## 380 Directions touching

Chap. 7. my Covenant with God. Now  
 my examination of my self as to  
 these, is onely in order to the en-  
 deavour of *godly sorrow*, and that in  
 order to *work repentance*. And the  
 particular practice of all these I have

*Pr. Deuo.* above considered: thither there-  
*Part. 4.* fore I am to return, and in the or-  
*Chap. 6.* der laid down there, to endeavour  
*Self. 4, 5* sincerely to sue out the pardon of  
*6, &c.* my sins, *considering them*, and their  
*aggravations*, to move me to sorrow  
 and contrition for them; *studying*  
 how to *mortifie* the habits of them,  
*resolving* upon the use of such  
 means as God directs me to; *en-*  
*deavouring*, as far as possible, the  
 making *amends* to any I have  
 wronged; and, to compleat all, be-  
 taking my self to God in *prayer*: by  
*confessing* my several sins to him;  
 and *beseeching* and depending up-  
 on him for pardon through the  
 blood of Christ. All this I com-  
 prise under the name of *Penitential*  
*Devotions*: and as the examination  
 of my self naturally leads me here-  
 unto

## the Lords Supper. 381

unto, so is this a part of preparati- Chap. 7.  
on most undispensably necessary for  
the Lords Supper. And for the per-  
formance of this, it is not to be  
thought an hour or two are suffi-  
cient. It is very necessary, that be-  
fore my approaching to the Lords  
Table, I have for a good space set Pr. devot.  
up such a weekly course of humili- Part. 4.  
ation of my self, as hath been above  
consulted of, if my leasure and  
condition of life will bear it. Then  
may I have particularly looked  
over my life, and understood my  
self some considerable time before-  
hand, so that I shall not have my  
repentance whollo to begin, but  
onely to iterate and further com-  
p'eat.

But if I cannot obtain of my self  
or affairs so much leasure for Devo-  
tion so long before, yet supposing  
I am now the first time to commu-  
nicate, if I consider the work I  
have to do, I cannot well begin to  
think of examining my self and  
beginning my *Penitentials* later,  
than



Chap. 7. than a fortnight before my intended Receiving: Not that my devotion must take up the whole time, but that, being several and frequent times in examination of my self, and if possibly keeping three or four Fasting-daves (at some distance one from another) for this purpose of particular viewing my life, and distinctly considering bewailing, confessing and resolving against my sins, I may be sure to have made through-work, to have repented of, and shut out of my soul all my known iniquities, and so be able with a clear conscience to approach this holy mystery. To this purpose (though I should commend it to all new Communicants, yet especially to such, who have less time and liberty for their devotion) do I commend *Easter* as the fittest time for first receiving, by reason of the foregoing Fasts of the Church; which whether all Families do observe, or no, it is certain that on some of them they are called

## the Lords Supper. 383

ed to the *publick Service* of God, Chap. 7.  
and particularly to *confessions*, and  
*humiliation* of themselves, and not  
suffered (the whole dayes at least)  
to labour. And these Fasts and  
dayes of publick prayers in Lent,  
if the new Communicant observe,  
and in the serious fear of God deal  
plainly with his own heart, he may  
well be supposed, by Good-Friday  
at night, to have in a good measure  
discharged the view of his life and  
Penitential Devotions. However I  
would so cast it, that the *Friday be-*  
*fore* that *Lords-day*, on which I  
first communicate, I might have  
viewed and lamented the summ of  
my sins, and in my *Saturday devo-*  
*tions* rather have my repentance to  
look over and more complete, than  
to begin, or a great part to do. Be-  
ing then supposed to have examin-  
ed my self, as to my knowledge,  
and as to my sins, (and to have en-  
deavoured to make up all breaches  
between God and me, under which  
is comprized reconciling my self to  
my

## 384 Directions touching

Chap. 7. my offended neighbour (as before  
 said in the particular practice of  
 repentance) the *next matter* of

(3.) which I am to examine my self,  
 which should be my work on *Sa-  
 turday*-evening, is the present state  
 and temper of my mind, whether  
 is that such as is fit to bring to the  
 Lords Table? Now, that I shall  
 know hereby: is my heart tender  
 and affectionate, disposed to those  
 Christian graces which I am there  
 to act? *viz.*

1. To relentings for my sins, pur-  
 poses against them, and resolves of  
 Holy life?

2. To humble dependances, and  
 trust on God in my Saviours blood  
 for pardon?

3. To Spiritual joy and thank-  
 fulness?

4. To good will towards all men  
 charity and liberality?

If I find my self disposed to these  
 Holy affections, I am in a fit tem-  
 per to approach the Lords Table.  
 If I find these dispositions wanting,

## the Lords Supper. 385

I am (1.) Seriously to bewail it. Chap. 7  
(2.) To look over my former preparations; possibly those have been too slighty: some sin may yet lie unrepented of, which hardens my heart; and if any such I find, to repent of it particularly; if none such found, (3.) an affectionate and tender temper is to be endeavoured by *prayer, reading, and Meditation*. Especially, let me read and meditate the story of my Saviours passion, reflecting still on his Innocency, and my own Being of the guilty number, the punishment of all whose sins he bore. But if all will not melt my heart, it being supposed that all my penitential devotions by way of preparation have been honestly performed, let me not for this the hardness of my heart forbear communicating. Possibly the stone is so hard, nothing but my Saviours blood will soften it. To that therefore let me resolve to repair, yet not so as to intermit the use of any means, and especially

S ally

## 386 Directions touching

Chap. 7.

ally of frequent prayer, to dispose my heart in that holy sort, and to those holy affections above named, which I ought to carry with me to the Lords Table. And here, though to hit the condition of every soul be impossible yet it may not be unprofitable to consider of such a form of preparatory prayer as may be fit for me on the *Saturday* evening, and *Sunday* morning, before I communicate, to add to my former devotions (which are not by reason of my having been frequent in prayer to be remitted, but rather intended.) And such an one is this,

**O** Father of Mercies, who from the beginning hast been in Christ, reconciling the world to thy self, and to ensure as well as compleat this reconciliation, hast called the faithful to the Communion of the body and bloud of him thy Son, that true passeover, who

## the Lords Supper. 387

who tasted death for every Chap 7.  
man. With what Holy hands,  
and pure and heavenly Heart,  
ought I to receive this the  
food of life which comes down  
from Heaven? Yet, Lord,  
how vile and polluted am I?  
my very preparations need re-  
pentance, and my tears sorrow.  
And besides the *insufficiency*  
of my repentance (which  
I beseech thee in the blood  
of Jesus to pardon) I have o-  
ther miserable defects and di-  
stempers, which, Lord, if thou  
wilt not remove, I am like to  
bring with me to thy Table.  
An exceeding *dull heart* I car-  
ry, very far unbroken for my  
sins, unaffected too with that  
zeal of *love* and *thankfulness*  
towards thee, of *charity* and  
good will towards Mankind,  
S 2                      which

## 388 Directions touching

**Chap. 7.** which I ought to bring thither with me. That *Trust* and Dependence which I exercise on thy Mercy in Christ, I have reason to fear may be too presumptuous. But Lord thou knowest I have endeavoured to mourn over, and repent of my sins: I have *vowed* to have respect unto all thy Commandements, and not to regard any iniquity in my heart. These my *vows* of Holy life, I have ready to seal at thy Table. Oh that thou by the blood and spirit of thy Son wouldest *seal me* to the day of redemption *pardon*ing all my past sins, and by the power of thy *Grace*, preserving me from future backslidings. Make this blessed Sacrament a feast of *fat* things unto my soul. Vouchsafe



## the Lords Supper. 389

safe me thereby larger & com- Chap. 7.  
munications of grace and com-  
fort than ever yet I received.

And to that end, at present  
thoroughly *wash me* from the  
guilt of all my sins in the bloud  
of my Saviour; from the guilt  
of all *I know*, and have con-  
fessed; and from the guilt of  
all my secret and *unknown*  
transgressions. O Lord, if there  
be any unseen iniquity of mine,  
which is like to interpose and  
hinder good things from me,  
reveal and discover that to thy  
servant, that by serious re-  
pentance thereof he may ob-  
tain the washing of it away,  
and may draw near with a true  
heart, sprinkled from all evil  
conscience. And, Lord, let  
thy Spirit go along with me,  
impowering me from above,

S 3

and

## 390 Directions touching

*Chap. 7.* and at those instants when I shall receive that bread of life and drinke of that cup of the New Testament in my Saviours bloud; let my heart so relent for all my sins, be so inflamed with fervour of Holy resolutions, of faith, love, gratitude, and most Christian Charity, that I may in nothing behave my self unworthily: Hear, O Lord, and remember thy servant for good, through that bloud which he longs to be sprinkled and satisfied with.  
*Amen.*

One thing here let me admonish young Communicants of (*youth being hot and more ready to vow than faithful to pay*) that they do not through imprudent zeal intangle themselves in too severe and inconsiderate vows at the Lords Table. All known sin must be resolved

## the Lords Supper. 391

solved and vowed against: all Chap. 7.  
known duty resolved for, and the  
endeavour of it, with utmost  
strength, vowed: Yea, the means  
of avoiding and mortifying sins,  
(according as we have in our Chri-  
stian prudence, consulted of them)  
must be resolved on. But here we  
must be wary that by particular  
vows against some matters in them-  
selves innocent, we do not tie up  
ourselves so strictly from that li-  
berty, which God hath left us (and  
we had better have studied to have  
used Christianly than vowed total-  
ly to abridge our selves of) that we  
either repent afterwards, or prove  
unfaithful to our vows.

But to return. Having with some  
such Prayer as this above closed up  
my evening Devotions, let me be  
very careful of my carriage after-  
wards, least I any wise disturb so  
much as I have obtained of a good-  
temper. To this purpose, let me  
order all my next daies affairs (e-  
specially if I have any command or

## 392 Directions touching

**Chap. 7.** considerable service in a family)  
 that my heart and hands receive as little disturbance or avocations by them as may be; which when I have done, let me chearfully commit my self to sleep with all convenient earliness.

And as it is my duty constantly and ought ever to be my care (as being of most wholesom and comfortable influence) to *sleep and wake with the thoughts of God* fresh and neereſt to my heart, ſo ſurely can I but think my ſelf concerned at preſent to cloſe and open my waking eyes with Divine thoughts and ejaculations: which if I do, I am now devoutly come to the morning of that day, on which I hope to receive the Sun of Righteouſneſs into my ſoul, everlaſtingly to enlighten, cheriſh, and in the end, gloriſie it.

With convenient earlineſs then I riſe, and applying my ſelf ſeaſonably to my Devotions, in my morning meditations, I ſhall find thus  
 much.

## the Lords Supper 393

much new convenient to be added. Chap. 7.

1. That I consider afresh (for I am not now supposed first to do that, If I have practised foregoing rules) how I may with due Devotion behave my self at the Lords Table, and what are those particular duties and graces, which there I am to exercise (of which in the following Chapter.)

2. That I set apart and devote somewhat to be offer'd to God at the Lords Table for the use of the poor, or maintenance of those who are not otherwise provided for. It is evident by Apostolick order this ought not to be omitted. 1 Cor.

*On the first day of the week (viz. 16. 1, 2. when they assembled together to break bread) as I have given order to the Churches of Galatia, so do ye. Let every one lay by him in store as God hath prospered you. And this was of old so plentiful, that besides that it sufficed to make a feast, which they called a Feast of love, at which poor as well as rich, after the Lords*

S 5

Supper

## 394 Directions touching

**Chap. 7.** Supper, refresh themselves (and of which we evidently read the abuse in 1 Cor, 11. 20. &c.) it relieved poor Christians, maintained the Ministry who were not otherwise provided for, and did many other publick goods. I ought not therefore either to do this too sparingly, or in any wise omit it, if able. I am further

3. To enquire afresh into the temper of my heart, and endeavour to bring it to such due disposition as before spoken of. And

Lastly, To add to my morning Prayers in private, some earnest petitions for the assistance of Gods Spirit, and a due frame of mind in participation of these holy Mysteries: in which case helps and directions have been above considered, and are to be used as I find it with my self.

If after all this done, I have any spare time before my appearance in publick, I may well spend it in reading over the Communion-Service, (which

## the Lords Supper 395

(which if a young Communicant, Chap. 7.  
 I may be conceived not much vers'd  
 in) by which means I shall be able  
 with more readiness, intelligence,  
 and devotion to go along in it at  
 the publick ministration. If I suffi-  
 ciently understand this, the reading  
 the Story of my Saviours Passion,  
 and all along applying and (as I  
 ought ever when I read it) reflect-  
 ing upon my self, as being one of  
 these guilty wretches for whom he  
 suffered all this, and who upon my  
 honest faith shall have my share in  
 all the benefits and merits thereof,  
 will be seasonable and profitable  
 employment for those spare mi-  
 nutes, and odd ends of time, which  
 I have vacant.

Hitherto of the course of my pre-  
 paratory devotions, supposing me  
 now the first time a guest at the  
 Lords Supper. My work will be  
 much the same upon all my returns  
 thereto: onely, possibly, I may not  
 be able to spare, nor haply shall  
 find it in such strictness necessary to



## 396 Directions touching

Chap. 7. Spend, alwayes so much time in the  
 ~~~~~ revising all my life, and particularly  
 lamenting all my old sins upon eve-
 ry return to the Lords Table. In-
 asmuch as, if I am duely careful after
 my first receiving, I shall observe
 some certain fixed time of calling
 my self to account of my carriage,
 and humbling my self for my mis-
 carriages; and by that means be
 better versed in the particular know-
 ledge of my wayes, and keep all
 straiter between God and me.
 Notwithstanding, *two dayes* before
 my intended returning to the Lords
 Table it is very fit (though I am an
 old communicant) I begin to think
 of preparing my self: one of which
 dayes I should be sure to keep as a
 Fast, and that with something more
 than ordinary solemnity; touching
 which and my penitential work
 thereon, I have above considered:
 And as touching the rest of my pre-
 parations in bringing my spirit into
 a due temper, and disposing it to
 such Christian graces as I am to
 exer-

the Lords Supper. 397

exercise at my receiving, I cannot Chap. 8.
be now at a loss after such particular consideration as hath been above taken, and is now proceeding with.

Chap. VIII.

Of Christian Duties at the Lords Table.

IT remains now that having duely prepared my self in all the particulars above mentioned,) in none of which as I tender my soul and the benefits of worthy receiving, must I be careless) I consider so of my duties at this holy Table, that no misbehaviour here render me unworthy.

Having devoutly (in the order
* formerly propounded) gone
through the foregoing service of * Pa.
God in the Church, (Prayers and Dev.
Sermon) coming now up towards Part 3.
the Lords Table, I gravely take my Chap. 8.
place ,

Chap. 8.

place : and till the assembly be all placed, it is far better for me to be upon my knees, and at my prayers, than allow my eyes to gaze, and so my mind to wander.

But the prayers begining again, it is very improper for me to be at, or proceed with, any private prayers of mine own. Joyn I must with the Congregation, and particularly heeding every passage, put my heart thereto : And the contrary is reprehended as an intollerable disorder by the Apostle in the Corinthian Church : *How is it (saith*
 1. Cor: 14 he) *brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, &c. When one is singing, another is minding exhortations, another prayers, &c. Let all things be done to edifying :* this then he thought an unedifying course : Yea not onely as to all the words and substance of the prayers and exhortations going before the Consecration of the Elements, but even to every passage and particular Cere-

the Lords Supper. 399

Ceremony in the consecration let Chap. 2
me keep my mind attentive; foras-
much as all of them have their
meaning and reason, and do tend
to edification. Particularly the Sa-
cramental actions on the part of the
Minister, to bee by me heeded and
understood are,

1. *Taking of the bread and ta-
king of the cup*, both used by our
Lord, which are nothing else but a
solemn separation of the Bread and
Wine from common and ordinary
use. Thus was the Lamb to be ta-
ken out, set apart from the Flock. Exod. 12. 3.
And that which is signified hereby
is Gods eternal setting apart and
destinating the Lord Christ to this
office of being our Saviour; in re-
spect of which, he is called the
Lamb, slain from the foundation of
the world. Rev. 13. 8.

2. The blessing the Bread and
Wine, represents God the Father,
sanctifying and furnishing our Lord
Christ, as to his humane nature,
with all gifts necessary for the dis-
charge

400 Directions touching

Chap. 8. charge of the office of our Redeemer: his blessing him *with the Spirit above measure.*

Of the breaking of the Bread, and pouring out of the Wine, the signification is obvious and above touched.

3. *The Bread and Wine thus taken, and blest, broken, and poured out, are distributed to each by the Minister: The giving of them denotes Gods giving Christ, and Christs giving himself to us; and the particular distribution of them to each, the particular respect had to each, and the particular application of Christ unto each; and not of a piece of Christ to one, or a piece to the other, but unto each of all Christ. And further, As the Bread and Wine are not only given to us, but given to us with this design, that we eat the one and drink the other, so doth God give the crucified Saviour to us at present, whose Flesh is meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed, for the spiritual nourishment*

Joh. 6.
55.

the Lords Supper. 401

ment of our souls and growth in Chap. 2.
Grace. These are the Sacramen-
tal actions on the part of the Mi-
nister: Others there are on the re-
ceivers part; to wit, their *taking*
and eating, and *taking and drinking*.
There *taking*, signifies their parti-
cular *laying hold* on Christ by trust
and faith, their *flying to*, and ap-
prehending him, as the means of
their salvation, and pardon of
their sins, and dependance on him
accordingly. *Their eating and drink-*
ing signifies the close and intimate
union of them to Christ; for as
our meat passes into our substance,
and is most intimately united to us,
so are we hereby sealed and made,
as it were, *flesh of his flesh, and bone*
of his bone.

All these matters ought I to be
meditating, according as every par-
ticular gives me proper occasion;
and the attending unto every parti-
cular passage, is that which is the
proper devotion at this time requi-
red of me. Not so, but that I may
and

401 Directions touching

Chap. 8 and ought to send up many ejaculations to God intermixt with these meditations, which I shall have the best opportunities for, while the Communion is administering to others. Then especially, if there be no Psalm singing, I may well recollect my vows and resolutions of Holiness, which in my private humiliations of my self, I have made, and beg Divine grace, to enable me to keep them; and otherwise address my self to God, as my Christian prudence and devotion shall suggest. But certainly to spend my time purely in private prayer, so as in their season not to attend to these Sacramental actions, or the chief of them at least, is very improper and disorderly.

In these exercises of my devotion in this order and method, am I supposed to await till it comes to my turn to receive the *Holy Bread* which when I receive, and am now feeding on, I imploy my soul in some such ejaculations as this.

the Lords Supper. 403

I Bless thee O Father, for my ^{Chap. 2.}
Saviour and Lord the Holy
Jesus. I adore thee O Lord
Christ with thine eternal Spirit.
I acknowledge and believe thy
body to have been crucified
and broken by thy Fathers
wrath for me; beseeching thee
that through the same, this
body of mine may be sealed
to an holy and eternal life; and
withall devoteing my self to
thee by solemn vow, which
by eating here at thy Table
I seal, with all my soul and
strength to serve thee all my
days. Let thy grace O Lord,
be sufficient for me.

¶ When I have now eaten, and
during such eating, thus applied my
self to God, it may possibly so
come to pass, that the generality
of the Assembly is singing: if there-
fore

404 Directions touching

Chap. 8. Before the *Psalm* be pertinent and sense (as it is to be lamented many which are sung in the Church are scarcely so) it is meet I joyn with them: if it be not, I see not how I can joyn with them any further, than by praising God in my mind, by meditating in such pertinent sense as possibly the translators of the *Psalm* have corrupted. I am sure God requires me not to praise him in what is not sense, or so pitiful that my judgement cannot attend to, but nauseate: nor doth our Church injoyn it, the Metrical translations of the *Psalm* being only allowed and tolerated, not at all imposed. I say therefore, I must be sure to employ my soul in seasonable holy Meditations of Christs sufferings, the benefits thereof, of my union with Christ by this Sacrament, or the like: and thus meditating, wait till it comes to my turn to drink of that holy Cup: which when I take into my hand, that verse of the *Psalm* may well run in my

the Lords Supper. 405

my mind, I will take the cup of sal-
vation, and call on the name of the
Lord: and, as far as I can, while I
drink, however, most surely when
I have drunk thereof, let me some-
what more at large lift up my soul to
God in some such sort as before.

I Bless thee, O Almighty Fa-
ther, O crucified Saviour, O
sanctifying Spirit, that my soul
is thus refreshed. I acknow-
ledg and believe thy blood, O
Holy Jesus, to have been shed
for my sins; let it rest on me for
remission of them, and therein
let all sins be washt away,
and I sprinkled from all evil
conscience, being now made
clean, Oh, that I may sin no
more!

Having thus received, in case of
such *Psalm* sung as before allow-
able; I Joyn therein, otherwise, I
employ my devotion as I did after
my

406 DIRECTIONS TOUCHING

Step 2. my partaking of the bread till all having received, the Church prayers afterwards begin; in which with the utmost fervency of my spirit, I praise and petition God. And though I should not before these have sung an hymn, yet do not I depart from the Lords Table without a very Seraphical Hymn, if I devoutly join in the Church prayers: for such is that which is sung or said after the administration, *Glory be to God on high, &c.*

Before I depart from the Lords Table, I must be sure to *make my offerings*, I mean, leave somewhat for the refreshing of the poor, as a pledge of my gratitude to him, who hath thus fed my hungry and thirsty soul. Having thus done, I depart, prayers being ended, with a serious and cheerful heart and countenance; I keep good thoughts in my mind, but yet pass not so reserved, but that I cheerfully salute any of my Christian brethren, I have occasion, remembering in the ancient Church

the Lords Supper. 407

Church, the Assemblies, especially Cha. after every Communion, parted with an *Holy kiss*; very seasonable may it be, and a right charitable imitation of the old feasts of Love, to invite any poor communicants home to my Table, for home now I hasten.

Chap. IX.

Of duties more immediately and remotely following the reception of the Lords Supper.

AND when I am now come home, I forthwith retire to my privacy for a small space, where my business is *Inquiry* into my self and suitable *addresses* to Heaven.

Two or three things there are, touching which, I cannot but think my self obliged to enquire. (1) Touching my own behaviour, both at the Lords Table, and since
my

408 Directions touching

Chap. 8. my immediate departure thence.

Was I so *attentive* and devout, as I resolved and prayed I might be? Or was I *heedless* in many points, and generally *dull* and *unaffected*? And since I came from those devotions, have I not by indulging wandering thoughts, or vain and wordly discourse, already lost much of the benefit I obtained.

(2.) How succeeded all between Heaven and me? What found I of the *quickening* or *comforting* influence of the Holy Ghost? This is that, which they who mean any thing intelligible thereby, mean by *Communion with God*, consisting in nothing else but a mutual agency between the *mind* of man worshipping God, and God enlivening and affecting it. The *mind* flies out to him by Heavenly thoughts and desires, and he by *his spirit* not only heightens that devotion, but fills the mind with hopes and confidences, that its devotion and it self are accepted (and with joys thence conceived

the Lords Supper. 409

ceived; which, according to the de-^{Chap 9:}
votion of the mind, are higher or
more moderate, sometimes *unspeak-
able and full of Glory*. Touching
this success, I say, I must inquire,
and if upon inquiry made, I find
my self to have been dull, and to
have felt little or nothing either of
the quickenings or joyes of the
Holy Spirit, I am (3.) to exa-
mine the cause, for undoubtedly it
lies on my side; I was either *sligh-
ty* in my *preparations*, or *heedless*
in my *participation*, or else there
is some other distemper in mine
heart (possibly yet unseen by me)
which causeth God to keep at a di-
stance, and as it were estrange him-
self. Suitable to what I find con-
cerning my carriage success, and
present state, should be my address
to Heaven; which (though haply,
by reason of common affairs, ne-
cessarily somewhat brief, yet,) ought
to be as affectionate as may be. Pos-
sibly, the following form may not be
unfit (if for use, yet not) for di-
rection.

T

My

432 Directions touching

Chap. 9.

MY soul and all within
me bleſſeth thee, O
Lord my God, for that bread
of life, and cup of ſalvation
from which I now come. What
am I that thou ſhouldeſt
feed me from Heaven, and aſſume
me into ſo intimate an union
with thine Eternal Son? I, who
have tranſgreſſed all thy Laws,
abused thy Mercies, ſlighted
thy Judgements; I, who have
refuſed thy Calls, reſiſted thy
Spirit, broken all my former
Covenants with thee: what
am I that thou ſhouldeſt thus
readmit me into ſo high fa-
vour? It is, O Lord, becauſe
thy Mercy is above all thy
Works, and the riches of thy
Grace moſt inexhauſtible: that
Mercy and Grace I adore, I
admire, Oh, that I may Eter-
nally

the Lords Supper. 433


Chap. 9.

nally magnifie! Nothing is there, Lord, in me, but what may provoke thy wiath, and hinder my happines. How gross were my unpreparednesses for thy Table? How many the wandrings, and how great the dulnesses of my heart even under my nearest approaches to thee there? These may justly hide thy face from me. And I cannot but bless thee, that thou hast not more estranged thy self, and instead of hopes of thy favour, sent me home with a sence of thy wrath. But, Lord, though I am not worthy [** and have not tasted so highly*] of those joyes and comforts of that hidden Man-
na, which thy choise and holier Servants taste, yet vouchsafe me this benefit by the com-
munion

** Such expressions as these, are to be used as they are found to suit with the particular condition of the worship-er.*

T 2

412 Directions touching

Chap. 9.  munion of the body and bloud of thy Son; that I may receive such grace and perpetuated influences of thy Spirit, as may enable me to performe unto thee all my-vows; so that I never, by revolting into any known sin, unhallow this soul and body of mine, which the body and bloud of thy Son hath this day sanctified; but denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, may live soberly, righteously, and godlily in this present world, and in that to come, obtain a blessed resurrection, and some (though any mean) share of an inheritance with thy Saints in light, through the merits of my crucified Saviour *Amen.*

Having in some such sort suitably to my condition address my self
to

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to God, I have closed for the pre-^{Chap. 9.}
sent my Communion devotions, and it only remains, that in all my wayes hereafter, I remember my renewed Covenant, as judging it grievous to violate any one Article of what I have sealed in my Saviours blood, and to have that abused blood (through which onely I can have pardon) to be a witness against me. It is certain, that consequent unworthiness (that is, behaving our selves unworthy, and disrespectful of the body and blood of Christ, after we have partaked thereof) is most dangerous: for he, who after his partaking shall from his heart endeavour to live worthy, was not undoubtedly an unworthy Communicant; so that *future fidelity* to my engagements, I cannot but look upon as the most critical point, which constitutes me a worthy receiver. This therefore I must daily mind, and with all my might endeavour; and very much conduceing hereunto I shall find these practices.

T 3 1. That

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Chap. 9. 1. That I frequently recollect my engagements and vows to God, to the end forgetfulness betray me not to the breach of them. To this purpose it were very well, if (according to former consideration) I kept them in writing.

2. That I carefully maintain a constant course of daily devotion, (such as above described) and be sure therein to imploy my heart as well as lips; this will keep in my heart a sense and fear of God, and besides, draw his grace and blessing on me.

3. That I carefully watch and provide against, and endeavour throughly to mortifie that sin or sins, to which my natural constitution or course of living is most apt to betray me, and by which I have formerly most sowlly fallen. Hence is the greatest danger to be feared: here therefore should be kept the strongest guard.

Chap.

Chap. X.

*Whether 'a Christian may not
worthily communicate with-
out observation in strictness
of the former method. Some
reflections on dying mens
communicating, and conclusi-
on of all.*

AFTER this particular considera-
tion of worthy receiving the
Lords Supper, the rules laid down
being stricter than what most ob-
serve, it may possibly be demanded
whether a Christian may not com-
municate worthily, although he
should not observe all these rules,
especially as to the strictness of
preparation, and the quantity of
time to be spent therein.

In answer whereunto it must
be Premised, (1.) That the spiritual
estates and ordinary lives of men

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Chap. 10. are various. The generality of men spend very little time in daily private devotion. Those, that accustom themselves to, daily private prayer, use not haply much to examine their own hearts, and take a daily account of their walkings, so as to confess and sue for pardon for every sin they see themselves that day to have fallen into. Others on the contrary side maintain generally such strictness in their private devotions daily. And again (2.) There is difference between coming occasionally a guest to the Lords Table, when I did not long before intend it, and coming in my ordinary course when I had a weeks notice of it, and intended to come so long before. Occasional communicating I call that, when being abroad on a Lords day, or some like solemn day, I come into a congregation by me well enough known, and there find the Table prepared, and hear all, who are fit to be guests, there present invited

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invited to it: or, when being in the family with some dying or decrepitly infirm person; I am invited upon ~~these~~ ^{Chap. 10.} warning, to make one of that number which are to communicate with him.

Now for satisfaction to the case put, I say, it being supposed I am a person who maintain such a strict course of daily private devotion, as above described, it cannot be, but that I am well acquainted with my own heart and wayes; and there can be litt'e on my conscience to detain me from the Lords Table. In such a case then, it is evident I carry about with me in a manner an *habitual preparation*. If therefore I by a short meditation (to which purpose, if there be any tollerable convenience, I retire, otherwise, I call my *soul* as it were into private, and *commune with mine own heart*) if I say by a short meditation I look into my self, and find nothing but that my breast is clear, after some address secretly to God

T 5

to

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Chap. 10. to dispose my heart for what I intend, I may undoubtedly approach the Lords Table in an acceptable sort: provided I omit nothing of the strictness of that case which I am to take in the *act of receiving*, nor, *of after-fidelity*. And indeed I do not know, did men live so Christianly as they should, how a Christian can turn his back upon the Lords Supper, whensoever he hath conveniences for it, without a sinful neglect. And if men do not live so Christianly as they should, I think no one will doubt but that again is a sin; so that generally the turning my back upon the Communion, except it be to leave room for others, or because some other Christian duties at that time call for me, must be concluded sinful; and sinful too not to live in such an habitual preparation, that, upon occasion, after some communing with my my own heart, I could not safely approach thereunto.

But it must be remembered, this is
only

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only allowable in grown Christi- Chap. 10
ans, and men of strict devotionals;
and in these two, rather in their oc-
casional than set and long intended
communicating. To others, or to
these in their ordinary course of re-
ceiving in their own Church, I
scarce can judge the former dire-
ctions of inquireing into them-
selves a day or two before hand,
of fasting and humbling themselves,
and taking pains duely to dispose
their hearts to the highest pitch of
devotion, may be omitted without
sin.

¶ Touching what devotions
concern a dying man in order to his
communicating. it may not be un-
expedient to add somewhat; but I
had rather consult more generally
touching what preparations for
death that man should make, who
had formerly in his life for a good
space observed the course proposed,
both in the foregoing tract of de-
votion, and this of communicat-
ing.

And

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Chap. 10.

And for a conclusion to the whole, and by way of commendation of this Method to the practice of all who read it: I will say, that in case a man have carefully and conscientiously practised the foregoing Method, whether he be taken on a sudden by death (from which I never thought it improper to say with our Church, *Good Lord deliver us*) or more slowly summoned and conveyed to his Grave by a disease; he hath little to do by way of preparation for death, but to continue his former practice.

Sudden death allows little time, but to call somewhat generally for Mercy and Pardon, and with sorrow (as particular as may be) for sin, to cast my self on God through Christ. *Death*, when it gives *warning*, calls me to the fullest and strictest practice of *repentance*, and *faith* as before considered. This then, if I have before conscientiously practised home to the time when disease or other accident summons

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summons me, I am an happy man; Chap. 10
for I have little work to do but to
beg my sincere repentance may be
accepted, and to rest in a comfortable
hope, that through my Saviours
merits it will be. This *hope* often
fled unto, will *overcome the ter-
rors* of death. In case my disease
be any whit lingring, the review-
ing and making sure my repentance
is of irrefragable necessity: nor
would I by any means omit the
Communion.

But before my participation
thereof (supposing my disease, I say
so patient) I would, if possibly set
my house in order, that is, dispose
of my Estate, Concerns and Trusts,
and in disposing hereof, if I have
it, it behoves me to give with due
liberality to the poor, no man a-
live having been so just a *Steward*,
but he hath need by gratifying the
poor, to obtain their prayers and
blessing, that his *wasting his Lords* Luke 16.
Goods, may not hinder his being 9.
received into *Eternal Mansions* of
bliss.
This

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Chap. 10.

This work of *disposing my Estate* though it should not begin my more immediate preparation for death (renewings of my repentance, being supposed first of all to take up my mind) yet ought to be *early dispatched*, inasmuch as my mind will be freer for Divine contemplation and devotion, when I have taken leave of worldly business.

This then being over, I, more solemnly than ever (as far as my power admits) revise my repentance, cast over the sins of my life, beg pardon through Christ, and so prepare my self (as formerly in my health) for this closing ordinance of my Lords last Supper. In this case, I must by no means neglect to consult with some *spiritual Guide*; to whom if I have nothing to unburthen my self of, yet I apply my self to, to receive *absolution*: the express words and commission of our Saviour, and the constant practice of the Church, being an irrefragable proof that there is weight

Ioh. 20.

22. 23.

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weight in that matter, though not Chap. 10.
so much as some pretend.

Having now set all, as far as I can, strait not only in my own judgement, but in the judgement of that Minister with whom I consult; it is fit (all meet circumstances admitting it) I proceed to partake of the Lords Supper, before which according to the order of the Church, I receive absolution. I have here little or nothing purely new, being to proceed by my former rules; only I am to endeavor to raise my devotion to the highest pitch.

The whole office being over, in Divine and *Heavenly thoughts*, discourses and prayers, should I, as comfortably and gladly as I can, await my dissolution: during this time, and possibly again, as near my dying moment as I can, should I solemnly commend all mine to God, by invoking the blessing of God on them, and counselling them the best I can to virtue: and above all,

I would press the serious practice of Religion upon them. (Mens dying words stick longest, and he is strongly Atheistical, who will not be moved by a dying mans asserting and urging the reality of Religion.) Thus, Lord, if thou pleasest, grant I may shut up my dayes!

To conclude, Know good Reader, who lives well, is generally prepared for death. Who comes to the Lords Table otherwise prepared, than he would go out of the world, is not prepared as he should be. The former Treatise of Devotion, if truly practised, leads to an holy and strict life: the present to due preparation for the Communion of the body and blood of Christ; so that he who will addict himself heartily to this practice, will undoubtedly prove an holy person, will live prepared for all which can befall him, even death it self: and him, whom such an happiness, as to be a real Saint, ready

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ready to pass hence into Eternity Chap. 10
of blessedness, free from all harms, dangers, and fears for ever, will not move to a practice, in self it so amiable, so pleasant, so advantageous, I can only say, *The Lord have mercy on:* but he hath nothing in himself, save his misery, to commend him to that mercy: and whether his guiltiness will not obstruct mercy, let him look, I should not dare to run such hazard.

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FINIS

